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A. RAMANATHAR LOHIA

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Sl. No. 110440

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OF
HISTORY

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RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

RAMMANOHAR LOHIA SAMATA
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P R E F A C E

At the instance of Badrivishal Pittie and the subsequent encouragement of Mahadeo Singh I delivered a series of lectures in Hyderabad in the middle of 1952. Y. S. Rao undertook the strenuous work of reducing the tape-record to script. Two of these lectures, presided over by Dr. P. Srinivasachar, I have since been able to revise and edit, but the rest must bide their time.

If the academic fate of previous excursions I undertook into economic and political theory were any guide, I should have desisted from the publication of this effort into historical theory. But hope is undying.

History appears to move with the inexorable logic of a Grecian tragedy. Around the end of 1953, after five weeks away from home, I was the only coloured listener to a group of white men and women in an airlines bus conversing in great detail on the bugs and insects of India and the life-long disabilities they cause. I held my tongue for a long while, for I have learnt to be patient though not yet in a complete way. To a particularly vivacious lady, I told the story of the cobra with its vicious bite beyond remedy. Some people in the bus thought that I was an embittered man. I was not aware of any bitter feelings, but was indeed suffused with regret at the bitter repetitiousness of history. I told the bus that India in fact was the poorest and dirtiest country in the world but that, in a hundred years or less, Europe and America may well change places with India. That is the wheel of history. It moves without emotion. My people and country have twice before stood on top of history and I would not like that to happen a third time. For, if there is a third time to get on to the top, we will as surely tumble to the dirt of the bottom again. Americans and Europeans, Greeks and Romans excepted and they are by no means current part of the white family, are new to this business of top and bottom. They have no race memories to tell them of the wheel of history. That is the great tragedy. If only man were not forever broken on this wheel and instead broke it on a designed approximation of the human

race, the world may yet ring with the wise man's laughter that I heard with Mahatma Gandhi and whose echo in Albert Einstein warmed me.

Gibran Mejdalani, his mother, their chauffeur, all three Arabs, and I once drove from Beirut to Damascus, land and hills hallowed by stories from the Bible. A wasp entered the car. Gibran's mother got agitated and had the car stopped. The wasp had settled on my side. I picked up some stiff paper and gently tried to push the wasp out of the window. The wasp dallied a little with me, as was only to be expected. Gibran's mother got further agitated and urged me to kill it. I told her that the poor thing would die by itself in a matter of days. She thought that it would sting some other man before it died and asked me what I would do to a snake. After telling her that animals and insects did not generally attack unless trod upon or reasonably frightened, I asked her what she would do to her own kind who attacked out of unreasoning fright or hate. She said that she would try to kill them. I told her that she would in that case have to engage in the preventive killing of the whole human race. Gibran intervened at this stage to tell his mother of India and of Gandhi. The wasp flew out of the window. Wasps have in fact to be pushed out of windows and, if there is a let-down on that, their stings and killers would multiply. Most species are however impossible to destroy through killing; they cease to be if their breeding is impeded. No bomb, not even hydrogen bombs, can ever so kill the human race that it ceases to breed. Evil that lies in living beings can never be killed outright; it may at best be prevented from breeding. Wasps have therefore to be pushed continually out of windows and their breeding places must be espied and cleaned. Will the reading of history ever help man to espy and clean the breeding grounds of the evil in his destiny ?

February, 1955.

PURPOSE AND HISTORY

Over twenty years ago some students of history were seated at a table of the Berlin University restaurant. Some of them were Hegelians and some Marxists, and I happened to throw a question at them as to how India, with its mature civilisation, fell under foreign rule. No one was arrogant, as was only befitting those who studied history, and the Marxist essayed an answer. He suggested that the market in India could not grow from the level of the village to the national level, that landless labour did not obtain sufficiently in the country because perhaps there were no large scale evictions, that there was not abundant commercial capital willing to grow into industry, and finally, that India did not have the good fortune of Mexico and other loot. It was a fairly comprehensive answer and, as facts went, a comparatively correct one. Before the British over-powered India, our market was largely at the village level, we did not have a large volume of landless labour, and as to our commercial capital, that is a disputable point. Nevertheless, I asked this Marxist fellow student of history as to why these various factors that he had enumerated obtained in England or other countries of Western Europe and why they did not obtain in India. To that he had no answer.

The Hegelian was then prompted to take the stage, and he essayed something about the spirit of history, that somehow the spirit of history did not at that time favour India well enough to ward off a foreign invasion and the people were exhausted. That too was an unsatisfactory answer. Coming from two schools of history, which purport to give an ultimate answer to the movement of history, this was upsetting. Undoubtedly the Marxist had attempted a good answer as far as symptoms go, but in relation to the cause of these symptoms, he was as much in the dark as the follower of another school of history would be. If the point had been pressed,

both the Marxist and the Hegelian would perhaps have been somewhat shrewder, probably also rude, in their answers. The Marxist may well have said that human history has careered along certain paths and the fact that, at a certain moment, India was not as well favoured as other countries, was not of very great importance to mankind. What mattered was the mode of production that mankind had steadily advanced from stage to stage. At that time, West Europe took the lead over India, and what I had attempted to ask was a secondary question. Likewise, the Hegelian might have gone on to say that the special genius of the Indian people lay in metaphysics, in anarchy and thought; anarchy, which sometimes produces great achievements of the human spirit and organisation, and on other occasions, especially when a people has already played its part in world history and exhausted its creative energies, stultifies itself.

These answers do not in any way give us a clue to the workings of history : the question still stays, why is it that a certain set of symptoms operated in a certain country at a certain period and did not operate in another. For, those who profess to give us a law or even some inkling of a process as to how man has developed through various periods must be able to indicate why peoples and classes have risen and fallen. If there is no answer to that, it would be futile to speak of a law of history. To describe symptoms is not to indicate causes.

Man has been variously defined. How little we can speak with authority on any subject is evident from the fact that no worthwhile definition of man exists. Man has often been called a thinking animal. It is left to him to doubt whether he really thinks, a good evidence of his capacity to think, and, if so, how far his conscious thinking affects his activities, his memory and associations. He has also been defined as a tool-making animal, a definition better than most. But there is another special quality of man and that is an awareness of himself and his relationships. Whether these relationships are with God, as some would try to indicate and define, or, with others and a nameless whole, is a secondary question; what matters is the awareness and quality of those relationships.

As soon as man becomes aware of himself, at whatever stage he did become aware of himself, and is seized with a grief at his sepa-

ration from the whole, and also a sense of bliss that he is what he is, and then starts thinking how he could assimilate himself with the whole, a search for purposes starts. The meaning of life is sought to be wrested and at some stage man begins to ask whether he is unravelling his purposes through history. There is no doubt but that man in various ages has lived to fulfil various purposes of life, whatever he thought was the meaning of life. Whether he thought such meanings out consciously or whether they were thrust upon him as a result of economic or other conditions is indeed a subject worthy of exploration. But these purposes have always been there, and so the meaning of life : where have I come from, whither do I go, why and how do I live? And in this search, which seems to have attended man's career throughout history, he has built institutions and destroyed them, he has waged wars and made treaties of peace, and, through all this development, he has again and again sought to discover whether this purpose of life can find its fulfilment through events which comprise the course of history.

There have indeed been schools of history which refuse to admit of any law or purpose or design in history. They think that it is all a play of the contingent and the unforeseen. Something happens. Why it happens, no one knows. All that one can do is to collect facts, and string them together and perhaps give a very fascinating account of what happened. History may be made to read like a novel, but it certainly has no design nor purpose. Whether such a view is at all tenable may be left to academicians. I would not be much interested in such a view because it does not accord me an instrument, a tool of thought, with which to work. But, in any study of the subject, this must always be kept in the background of the mind that there are learned persons who refuse to admit of any purpose and design in history. Even while we are out to discover such designs, let us ever remember that a large volume of opinion has decreed our search to be futile.

What to talk of purposes and interpretations, even facts of history are difficult to assemble, not alone of Indian history. I should very much like to know what Gautam Buddha felt when the greatest dancer of the age was introduced to him and wanted admittance into his Sangha. Did he feel ever so slight a tremor as this most accomplished woman of the age asked admittance into the Sangha?

We do not know, nor is it possible ever to know, because no one except Buddha knew what happened, or perhaps he too did not know what happened. What did Cleopatra feel when Antony replaced Caesar in her affections. Jesus too had his Magdalene. What exactly were the feelings of these persons who have so powerfully influenced the mind, not alone of their times, but of all times, will ever remain unknown to history.

How the caste system in India arose, and whether whole tribes which were conquered were integrated into the Indian caste system as its various castes, is a moot point for Indian historians, for they do not know the facts. The early beginnings of practically every people on earth are shrouded in myth and mystery. Facts of race migrations and their collisions and the settlement of continents have to be garnered from scraps of archaeological and literary evidence and much speculation attends them. While contemplating the history of man, it would be well to remember that historical enquiry has still to concern itself with the discovery of facts and that some of these are undiscoverable. The conflict in testimony and facts is also not resolvable at all in some cases. When such is the condition in relation to facts of outward phenomena and events, what to speak of those subtler motives and feelings, which influenced the great men of history but dwelt either in the sub-conscious or have not been communicated to us and which are a vital key to the designs and purposes of living. The search for a philosophy of history must, nevertheless, continue although with some humility.

CYCLICAL AND PSEUDO-CYCLICAL VIEWS

The purely cyclical view of history should be fairly familiar to the Indian. It speaks of four periods, the period Satyug that goes on to Kaliyug over two other periods of Treta and Dwapar, a kind of a golden age going on to the dark age with a yellow age and a brown age in between. It is a view of history which admits of rise as well as fall, an ascent over again after a fall has been reached. It seems to coincide with what actually happens in human life, where a people emerge victorious in their struggle with evil, attain to heights of glory and power, of goodness, or truth, or beauty, and then the spirit wearies. They start descending again into incohesion and weakness and general lack of purpose, when through inevitable light after darkness, the spirit flowers and an ascent is possible again. This Hindu view of history has denuded it much of its value and given to philosophy or religion much of what other civilisations have sought or are still seeking from history. While this has awakened great interest in the enduring things of life, that which passes has not received its due attention and has some times, avenged itself by degrading the Indian mind into impotence or cant. An attempt is also made to turn this deep and rich view of history into an allegory, deflowering the four cyclical ages in the life of a people into the numerous qualities of descending goodness. The Sanskrit names of these four ages are apparently rooted in the numerals, one to four, Kali being one and Sat four. Such allegorical interpretations of a purely cyclical view of history are neither correct nor rewarding. The essential quality of this view lies in the recognition of temporal events as that which passes, the good as well as the bad. Not even the bad endures and, as surely as that a people must descend after exhausting its energies, it must rise again. It is needless to add that each of these four ages has been allotted a definite span of time, undoubtedly more poetical than historical, but glory be to India's sages that they allotted to each descending age half the length of time of its predecessor.

Cyclical views of history are not a special quality of the Indian mind alone. They have reappeared in the present century of Western Europe and America, although not in a completely unadulterated form. They seem to be the mark of a civilisation in maturity or decline, for the period of robust youth is somewhat hostile to them. A great effort is now being made to discover the rhythms and periodicities of human destiny. All civilisations, so it is said, tend to go through these rhythmic periods. It has for instance been suggested that the career of a civilisation is attended by successive excellence in architecture, sculpture, painting and music. Some have even gone so far as to discover a similar succession in human destiny as a whole, the earliest civilisation being predominantly architectural and the existing civilisation predominantly musical. There is much evidence for a cyclical view of art in civilisation, but the invariability of such rhythms is open to serious doubt. An earnest effort is also being made to study various civilisations in their rhythmic periods and to pair them off one against another. So for instance, it is being held that the late career of a civilisation corresponds more closely with the late career of another civilisation, no matter that the distance separating them may extend over tens of centuries, than with its own early career. The styles of language and behaviour and the designs and purposes of living are thus believed to mature in a basically similar fashion in all civilisations. Attempt has even been made to determine the span of a civilisation, the number of times it can respond to big challenges to its existence and its final succumbing. The philosophy of man's history is almost becoming astrological. But analysts of history would do well to remember that if "That which is born must die" is true of peoples and historical groups as carriers of civilisation and even of human civilisation as such and its cultural categories, "That which dies must be born again" is equally true.

While there may be no universal validity in the findings of most of these cyclical philosophies of history, they are certainly more objective than the earlier philosophies of linear progress and have greatly leavened historical study. The illiterate hope of making one's own century the last word yet in human progress and of making Western Civilisation the centre of the entire world and the measuring rod of all previous civilisations is dying out, atleast in the op-grades of West European and American Universities. To

divide the history of the world into ancient, medieval and modern periods and to ascribe to them an ascent, linear or broken, is cultural barbarism, not even interesting. Spengler, Toynbee, Northrop and Sorokin amongst others have sought to end this barbarism, no matter what their errors in discovering the rhythms of a civilisation might have been. Their studies have certainly resulted in very valuable systems for the classification of historical phenomena. To be able correctly to classify is the first step to understanding.

Elements that go to compose a culture are sought to be separated and classified. Spengler, for instance, has opposed intellectual and observational cultures, that exist to-day and are according to him rigid, to the past cultures of immediate intuition. Northrop has also sought to separate the theoretic-scientific elements of culture from its intuitional-aesthetic elements and has shown with some evidence the preponderance of the former in the West and of the latter in the East. Sorokin's analysis seems to be somewhat richer in that he has sifted better and named these elements under the three categories of ideational, idealistic and sensate. Any impression of total opposition among these elements conveyed by such analysts would be somewhat erroneous, as each of them co-exists with the others in every culture. The emphasis may shift or vary and any one element may preponderate over the others. Such a varying preponderance may occur not only as between any two civilisations but also among the various phases of a single civilisation. It may well be that a people through its history becomes specially gifted as a carrier of any one preponderating element. The Indian people is thus believed to have a special penchant for intuitional-mystic culture.

Much evidence has also been accumulated to determine the rate of change in a culture, the tempo of change in intuitional cultures being slower than that of rational cultures. The possibilities of cultural diffusion have also been studied. While these philosophies of history are furnishing valuable tools for historical analysis and understanding, they are not reconciled to purely cyclical repetitions and are ever seeking a way out of the impasse into which their own ripened civilisation has descended. Even Spengler made intermittent efforts to seek a way out of the pervading gloom that had according to him spread over the Evening Lands. But most of such efforts to mix the best of all possible worlds are pedes-

trian, unscientific and unintuitional, no matter how so often they might call themselves integralist and the like. We may appreciate the fact that they recognise the need for integration, but, of any rational statement of such integration, there is little evidence. The spiritual and the rational are sought to be mixed up in such fashion and in the shapes that they have today acquired through long history that the mixers may well be called the Lysenkos of social philosophy. To graft the theoretic element as it has matured in modern civilisation upon the intuitional element as it is found among people of earlier civilisations, or, in popular parlance, to combine the spirituality of the East with the science of the West is an exceedingly futile endeavour. Men like Lewis Mumford and Martin Buber have indeed made some significant progress on the way to a genuine integration, but their work is inclined to lean a bit heavily on the aesthetic or religious side and they have not translated it adequately into rational terms. Intuition, to be so, must put out a thought and language whose rationality and spirituality are inter-changeable. The fact that the European intellect has passed over the work of Mumford or Buber in favour of Spengler or Toynbee would seem ominously to indicate that self-obsession is a rather stubborn quality in every culture and its primary virtue is to protect itself through lamentations or subtler devices. That intuition which reasonably embraces realities other than those of self is exceedingly rare.

The last but one historical fashion current in Western Europe, and even historical interpretation has fashions, was the cyclical view of Oswald Spengler, who wrote on the decline of the West, who seemed to think that every culture, every civilisation, went through various stages of birth and maturity and decline, of spring, summer, autumn and winter, that there was no getting away from a culture descending into a civilisation and then dissipating itself, that any culture, to whatever heights of eminence it might rise, was bound to die out to give place to another. I would make reference to just one passage from Spengler, which distinguishes a people in its rise and in its fall, in its rise a culture, in its fall a civilisation. In the period of its culture, it builds single storied or double storied houses which fit into the surroundings and seem to be a part of the nature around; in its period of civilisation, five storied and six storied and one does not know how many-storied houses, which are a rape of the Earth.

Philosophies of history characteristic of Western Civilisation in its rise have assumed progress linear or broken. Of such as have spoken of a continuing deterioration of mankind from a golden age that lay in the past, not much mention need be made, for they have produced no general nor enduring effect. Everchanging technology, which has been a mark of Western Civilisation and of the capitalist organisation of economy, gave Western man a robust faith in his future. Man seeks his self-interest and all men seeking their self-interest would produce the greatest good for everybody and this early assumption of capitalism was encouraged by the prospect of unending technological improvements. Even while child labour, wars among nations and extreme exploitation were rampant in the beginning of capitalism as they still are, the theory maintained that all these were transitory happenings and that when complete industrialisation will have taken place, when factory and agriculture would satisfy man's needs everywhere and perfect competition prevail, there would be peace for all men on earth and plenty for everybody.

In economics, this robust faith is sustained by a deductive scaffolding of reason through the work of Adam Smith and his successors. In politics, a similar optimism was sustained by the scaffolding of representative democracy and the work of Bentham and the Mills. In sociology, man was believed to have travelled from earlier tribal, theistic and metaphysical bases to modern positivism, to the faith reflected in Comte and Spencer. It was left to the Germans to take this faith to the more stubborn realms of this spirit and to give it a stupendous scaffolding of philosophy, more particularly the philosophy of history. Hegel and Fichte, each in his own way, brought heaven on earth through continual ascent of the spirit of history as embodied in man's successive institutions, the state being the queen of these institutions.

None of these views of economics, sociology and history is tenable, but they have become an essential part of the modern mind despite their rejection. Wherever, as in America, the power and glory of Western civilisation are not yet visibly arrested, faith in linear progress abounds. Wherever, as in Soviet Russia, the power and glory of this civilisation are apparently on the increase, faith in the continual progress of man through history abounds equally. Karl Marx, the prophet of communism, outlined a theory of economics

which was apparently the opposite of that of Adam Smith and a philosophy of history equally antithetical to that of Hegel. He was a prophet of faith in progress par excellence. His views may be as untenable as those of other great Europeans of the 18th and 19th centuries but, unlike them, he exercises a direct and deep influence over the mind of man. This influence may not be as remarkable in the regions for which he wrote his theory pre-eminently, but, through a curious twist of history and logic, he has become a most stubborn element of the mind of those enslaved and out-cast by western civilisation. He has helped light up to them the golden age, that is also not distant, although his function is to spread gloom among the major portion of West Europeans and Americans.

The belief in progress was commonly held through the nineteenth century in Western Europe, and even to-date, it emerges though with great humility in the latest fashion of history. I call the Spenglerian view the last but one, the latest is Toynbee's. Arnold Toynbee seems to think that the really great periods of man are not those about which we read so much in history, the deeds of great statesmen and emperors and warriors and generals, the building of great empires, or the accomplishing of great architecture or sculpture. He thinks that history achieves greatness when depression and disintegration occur, which give rise to the mighty religions that satisfy the real need of man. To Toynbee, the great periods of man would not be when empires were built but when great religions like Islam and Christianity and Buddhism were born and spread. Only in these periods of despond, man begins to think of his relationship with the outside world, the whole universe, nature and fellowmen. This view of history bears a family resemblance to cyclical interpretations. For, the present achievements in art and science, in machinery and industrialisation, are, according to Toynbee, the accompaniment of a decline that set in long time ago, of repression and disintegration evident from a general loss of purpose. It would appear to be the dark night after a destiny-laden day but long before the next dawn. But Toynbee ties up his golden future with the present age and the spread of Christianity, once again a linear view of progress according to which the dominant Western Civilisation of today will leap into the great world order of tomorrow. He somehow seems to think that Christianity being the most satisfying religion that has so far been allotted to

man, than which nothing more perfect is possible even in theory will in a little partnership with Islam spread all the world over, to give man internal peace and adjustment with environment and at the same time enable him to achieve world peace. As to other constructions that modern man has achieved, various forms of government and structures of economy and the fact that one part of the world is more powerful and wealthier than another, Toynbee would let history take its course. I suspect him to hold that the present age of capitalism, not necessarily in its militant form, but in its shapes such as the tribe of Roosevelt and the European socialists have tried to outline, or Western civilisation as he would prefer to call it, would be able to advance to a world from which war and poverty have been eliminated, assuming it wielded the spiritual weapon of Christianity to achieve internal peace.

This view of history that modern man with his industrialisation, with his mechanisation of agriculture, with his democratic governments, with his adjustments or balance of power among various nations, would be able to achieve his destiny, powerfully aided with a great religion such as Christianity, has considerable influence, but I would class it with any other view of history that seeks to combine the best of both worlds, the dogma of linear progress held by nineteenth century Europe and the somewhat greater objectivity of cyclical theories.

3

MATERIALIST INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

According to the view of history held by Karl Marx, man has travelled through various periods. Although he may not have purposely risen in ascent and this rise may not have been uninterrupted, there has been some force in history to cause a gradual climbing of man from earlier primitive or backward stages to the modern stage. How this happened has been very clearly enunciated and no one can accuse Marx of being ambiguous about it. Man has passed principally through four periods : the primitive communist, the slave period when there were the great autocracies, the feudal period, and is now going through the capitalist period. The first period may be left out of account, as it belongs to pre-history. Through all these periods, there has been a motion of history, a law of history, deriving from developing styles of production. Through all the various modes and styles of production have clashed the forces of production on the one hand and the relations of production on the other, various tools and manner in which they are used on the one hand and property relationships on the other. These two phrases, forces of production and relations of production, are the significant core of Marx's teachings on history. The clash between them leads to class struggle. Marx says that all human history hitherto has been the history of class struggle.

This struggle has streaked through all of man's history and has taken various shapes. Class struggle in the feudal period is different from class struggle in the capitalist period, but that there are different classes in these various periods is not questioned and that a struggle takes place between them is also undisputed. The struggle is aimed to liberate the agencies and forces of production, which are thrust down on account of a particular type of ownership enforced by the prevailing civilisation. Feudalism enforces an ownership of landed proprietors and does not permit production to grow beyond a point and the appropriate class of that period rises up to disrupt that order.

Similarly, in the capitalist period, the laws of property and its returns do not permit the full use of methods of industrialisation, of the application of science to industry and agriculture. The forces of production stay imprisoned until the working class is sufficiently strong and organised to disrupt the property relationship and release them. This has little to do with the mind of man and its designs. It takes place automatically in society. Man has got to will it because there are forces which compel him to do so. All development of history is placed inside the mode of production with its mutually warring factors, the forces of production and the relations of production.

Whether the history of man in all the world and not alone in Europe could be compressed into those three or four periods is open to serious doubt. Facts will have to be distorted in order to prove that there was an aristocracy of a slave period in India. Facts will again have to be distorted in order to prove that there was a feudal civilisation obtaining evenly over a demarcated period throughout the world, no matter that wide margins in years are permitted to varying climes.

Apart from such violence to facts as will necessarily have to be undertaken in order to divide the history of mankind into these three or four congenial periods, the system of history which Karl Marx outlined may be examined experimentally with prophesied but actual developments. The system of class struggle diagnoses that capitalism produces its own grave digger. While it grows and magnifies, capitalism gives rise to concentration of capital on the one hand and socialisation of labour on the other, to big capitalists owning and commanding larger and yet larger sectors of economy and the huge proletariat which gets organised not only because it wills so but more so because concentrated capital starts bigger factories and throws thousands of persons together to work in the same place. At the same time, exploitation of labour increases and its impoverishment is an inevitable consequence. This concentration of capital and socialisation of labour and its increasing impoverishment go on side by side until labour is so sufficiently socialised as to strangle the capitalist hold over economy, until the capitalist-worker relationship is destroyed, a communist or socialist order is established, and science is liberated in order to admit of its full application to industry and agriculture. Does it bear a close scrutiny successfully?

There undoubtedly has been concentration of capital, but what of socialisation of labour and increasing poverty among the proletariat ? What about the iron law of civilisation which Marx enunciated that class struggle would so take place that the great masters of the capitalist world would be fore-runners and pioneers of the socialist world ? If passages from Marx or Engels may be cited to prove that they admitted on one or two occasions the possibility of a revolution in Russia, most of the time they prophesied revolutions in Germany and England, and these passages anywhere are of little meaning. Such efforts are scholastic, for it would be possible to cull many kinds of stray passages from writings so voluminous. And anyway, China never was on Marx's agenda of communist revolutions. The search for stray passages has therefore stopped, and, inevitably also, the theoretical debate on the Marxian law of civilisations. The point is as to what law was laid down for development of mankind from the capitalist to the socialist period. Whether stray predictions have been right or wrong may be left unconsidered, the law in all its exactness is available to us and must be reviewed. The law says that class struggle will assume critical proportions in advanced stages of capitalist development. The proletariat of highly advanced capitalist countries will become so organised as to overthrow capitalism and usher in a communist or socialist civilisation.

A neo-Marxist may well suggest that socialisation of labour has taken place in advanced countries of capitalism while pauperisation has occurred in retarded countries of Asia and Africa. Marx himself had foreseen a combined development of these two factors. He thought that such a combined development would cause disruption of the capitalist order. A Neo-Marxist might say that the disruption has been somewhat arrested because masses of people have been pauperised in India, China, Malaya, Burma, Africa, and the like whereas the mass of the working class in U. K., Germany the U.S. and similar countries have got into larger factories and have indeed got socialised but with better wages. On account of this split-up between socialisation of labour in Western Europe and elsewhere and increasing poverty among the mass in India and elsewhere, the law has not operated as it was enunciated. The law then goes overboard. Should it be shown that with the pauperisation of the mass of the people in colonies and erstwhile colonies, a revolution

is likely to occur in these other areas, the whole edifice crumbles. It will no longer be possible to suggest that, with a change in property relationship, forces of production are automatically released so as to achieve plenty in the world. Revolutions will according to this view take place precisely in areas where forces of production have not gone much beyond the feudal stage or have even declined. Consequently, the new civilisation will start with a halter round its neck.

But the materialist interpretation of history enables the new civilisation to start in areas where capitalism is advanced so that, with socialist relations of property, use could be made of factories, machinery and scientific agriculture of developed capitalism in order to provide the world with plenty. With such a view, one could have thought of a golden age that was just around the corner. If relationships of production alone had been throttling the progress of mankind, class struggle would end them and achieve a society which could organise itself collectively on the basis of socialist production and make the fullest use of all available machinery and agriculture. But this rosy picture of a golden age around the corner was drawn with false tints, for ruling lands of the existing civilisation were expected to become the forerunners and pioneers of the succeeding civilisation. There perhaps lies the clue to how this law got formulated. Every person is fond of maintaining the accomplishment of his age and land and Western Europe has undoubtedly achieved much. Its civilisation has indicated unending progress at least in some directions, mightier and greater than any which mankind was able to achieve in any earlier period or clime. And none should blame the European mind for wanting to cling to this particular period of history or to outline a stupendous doctrine so that Europe may stay eternally on this pinnacle and may also achieve the imperishable glory of remaking the rest of the world in its own image.

In comparing the Marxist view of history with the Hegelian, either appears so utterly contradictory of the other. In their approaches and formulations, they may be set one against the other for, Marx found the motive of history in the mode of production whereas Hegel sees that motive in the spirit of man. But the essential result of either is similar. Hegel discovers history to be freedom broaden-

ing from primitive society in gradual stages to the Prussian state, which he thought was the last and the greatest pinnacle of human achievement. He named this gradual ascent as freedom of one to freedom of some then on to freedom of many and finally freedom for all. One would find a close family resemblance between this freedom of one going on to freedom of all and the development of human history from the primitive communist period over feudal aristocracy and bourgeois democracy to the full social democracy of communism. According to Hegel, this freedom of all was embodied in the spirit of man, and the political society in which the Absolute had made itself manifest was the concrete Absolute of the Prussian state. According to Marx, the Hegelian Absolute had manifested itself in the concrete absolutes of England and Germany, and perhaps to some extent, France; for, they were the advanced capitalist countries of Europe, where the inevitable motive of class struggle, which is the Marxist spirit of history, would cause the overthrow of capitalism and usher in a new socialist civilisation.

The leaders of existing civilisation are not fated to be fore-runners of the succeeding civilisation. It has not happened in history but that need not be the only proof. It seems inherently to be impossible for, in any civilisation, certain modes of production, certain styles of thought, some definite processes are firmly set. However much man may see that such modes of production and thought are no longer able to cope with the situation as it has developed, he is unable to change them because they are so firmly set. His whole edifice is centered round them or built over them and, however much human intelligence may be credited with the power to revise, and change, it seems to be a great strain on reason to imagine that a people, which has been the head of a particular type of civilisation and got set in its ways, would again be elastic enough to throw overboard these ways and take up new ways better able to cope with another situation.

That is not to say that class-struggle has not obtained in human affairs. There has been a struggle among classes throughout history and the time has now come to understand how it has actually operated. With an emotional like or dislike and the patriot's desire to preserve in his own country or age what has been achieved,

a student of history may not concern himself. What has been the form and process of this class struggle should be objectively studied. That there has been internal inequality all through the ages and that this has been expressed in various classes who struggle with one another is an undisputed fact. Internal struggle of the classes has indeed gone alongside of the external struggle among nations. No time need be wasted to prove the validity of these two struggles. Arnold Toynbee makes a continuing mention of these two factors, the internal struggle and the external struggle, and believes that a civilisation disrupts or stagnates under the two pressures of the internal and the external struggle, the struggle inside a nation among the classes, and the struggle among the nations. Marx did not pay sufficient attention to the distinction between the internal proletariat and the external proletariat. If he had, he would have credited socialisation of labour to the internal proletariat and debited pauperisation or increasing poverty to the external proletariat.

The most fruitful examination of a system is that of its internal logic. Materialist interpretation of history is raised on the internal logic of maturing forces of production clashing with rigid relations of production. In fact, this logic is utterly self-contained, sure and consistent within itself. While Europeans may have rejected it after an experimental examination, a type of Asian mind is still infatuated with the doctrine's self-movement of society like the egg moving on to the chicken. Society moves itself and the materialist interpretation holds the key to this movement. The key consists of the clash between maturing forces and rigid relations, between the expropriated and the owners. The key is intoxicatingly simple and it seems to reveal so well the secret of the universe. But what is the dark chamber it throws light into ? It only reveals that history is no history, that any given movement of the peaks and perhaps also the dips of history must always have been so in the past and ever continue like that in the future. At the present moment, a certain situation of matured forces and unchanging relations obtains in all the world. This situation has placed Europe and America on the peak of current history and the rest of the world at its bottom. The Marxist law should not take arbitrary refuge behind every explosion and revolution that took place consequent upon the clash between forces and relations, the present moment of the power of

Europe and America must always have existed and shall be everlasting in accordance with the self-movement of the total mode of production.

While considering the general law of materialist interpretation, catastrophes may be excluded from purview. If they are to be more than an exception, the general rule goes. The general rule lays down that the self-movement of capitalist society will enable its most advanced regions of West Europe and America to herald the communist society; on the same reasoning applied backwards, these regions must have been the leaders of feudal and earlier societies. If the key is usable forwards in history, it should be equally usable backwards. In fact, in the passage of man through the class-struggles and the self-movement of aristocracy, feudalism and capitalism, there should have been no history of the rise and decline of nations as we know it. Furthermore, any given moment, for instance, the moment when India or Egypt were on the pinnacle of history, should have been everlasting both before and after according to the materialist interpretation of history. The world should have in all history known an unchanging visage, with a starred smile fixed on one side and a frozen tear pocking the other. That the European intellect, in spite of its severe hostility, has not submitted the Marxian logic of history to such an internal examination is full of significant meaning. The effort of Marx was, after all, a colossal construction of the mind to keep the smile on the visage of Europe ever dancing. It was a peerless attempt of the European spirit. What European mind would be able or want to drag up by its roots this highly spiritual effort at Europe's everlasting glory? Like most other modern doctrines emanating from Europe, the materialist interpretation of history is also a doctrine in the service of the status quo, at least that part of the status quo which means European glory. This examination of the internal logic of dialectical materialism as applied to history reveals it to be as spiritual as it is undialectical, and altogether unhistorical.

MATTER AND SPIRIT IN HISTORY

Does the economic motivation of history go over-board ? In the present century, two historical works of equal merit have been produced. Charles and Mary Beard have written an engrossing account of the rise of American civilisation from the stand-point of the economic motivation. Meinecke has written an equally captivating account of the formative reason behind the modern state from the stand-point of the spirit and all that goes on in the mind. It would be difficult to judge between the two standpoints, for both accounts are alike fascinating and incomplete. To the understanding of history, they contribute greatly but not enough. An incomplete approach necessarily leads to errors. Hermann Oncken, to whom many like me of the Berlin University owe their taste for history, has written a brief but pervasive account of over a century of British foreign policy and of how it moved around the pivot of India's military security. It would be difficult to say whether he writes from any standpoint at all, but he succeeds eminently in discovering the thread of continuity in a jumble of historical happenings. His statement may be somewhat exaggerated and it may not answer the question of the ultimate, but what statement has ever done so. Matter and spirit, atleast for the purpose of history, have been artificially raised into dichotomies. Matter should be translatable into spirit and vice-versa and this translation has ever taken place. But a shadow has as often fallen between the image and the reality. The translation has suffered because either has misunderstood or mistranslated the language of the other.

If, for historical purposes, matter may be described as the economic aims and organisation of society and spirit as the general aims and direction of society, the relationship between the two has been basically misunderstood. Three possible types of relationship may exist,

subsidiary, independent and autonomous, and modern civilisation has explored alone the first two types. Those who make history as well as those who write history do so from the stand-point of the subsidiary or the independent relationship, and error of creation or understanding creeps in. The subsidiary relationship forms when the fulfilment of one set of aims is believed to lead automatically to the realisation of the other set. The Smith-Marx sociologists of history would let general aims flow automatically out of economic aims same as the Gandhian sociologist would make their economic aims flow automatically out of general aims. Such a belief in the automatic flow of the one from the other has distorted the creation as well as the understanding of history. Matter in such a case becomes inverted spirituality and spirit inverted materiality. If the spirit does not understand the language of matter and pays not sufficient heed to its claims, matter has a tendency to seek its own maximum efficiency and the spirit can do nothing about it. A deadlock is then reached. At this stage, spirit wreaks its vengeance upon matter and upsets the whole apple cart and starts on a new track, once again misunderstanding the language of matter. After having seen the complete impossibility of general aims flowing automatically out of economic aims and vice-versa, the modern mind has set out on a two-fold pursuit, one independent from the other.

Modern philosophies of history and politicians of various liberal or socialist orientations believe that, by doing independent worship at the two shrines of rationality and spirituality, they would be able to understand as well as to create. Such, however, is not the case, for the two goddesses are very jealous of each other and must be put in their proper places. Otherwise, they tend to cancel each other. An effective method of historical enquiry and creation would be to fashion a tool that combines spirit or general aims and matter or economic aims into an autonomous relationship. Then, they would have both to be sheared and groomed and taken out of their existing and traditional shapes and made to correspond to one another. The need of such a tool is being felt, at least by some, and its fashioning has therefore started. Such a tool of matter-spirit autonomes would enable a better understanding of history.

Every society or civilisation has tended so far to develop into a certain direction of organisational or technical efficiency. As

long as this efficiency grows, there are two possible spiritual reactions to it. Some reject it outright, for it does not correspond to their idea of what a society should be. However loud their protests may be, the influence of such a reaction on the course of events is negligible. Another reaction is to mistake this growing efficiency in one direction for total efficiency and, with or without alterations in detail, to put oneself in its service. When men confuse partial with total efficiency and begin to see it in the aim of their effort, they lose their capacity for a rigorous internal examination of the system in which they live. The system then continues to grow in the direction that accompanied its birth. Such a society inevitably develops like the Dinosaurs and other monstrous lizards or animals whom nature tried out perhaps also in its search for maximum efficiency in any one direction. Alike as these Dinosaurs and other animals died out or were relegated on account of their own internal weight or their incapacity to match creatures developing maximum efficiency in some other direction, a civilisation or society tends to develop maximum efficiency in its initial direction and then to fall under its own weight or under pressures from outside. As long as the efficiency continues to grow, there is health, vigour and general movement and, internally, different sections of the population engage in a class struggle to improve their various lots and, externally, they withstand pressures from outside and even draw sustenance from other societies. When maximum efficiency has already been reached and a deadlock ensues, the internal class struggle becomes unbearable and an attempt is made to resolve it into an apparently just system of caste and the external struggle with other societies becomes increasingly painful and outside the limits of strength. Under such conditions, the relegation or fall of a civilisation becomes inevitable. If the attempt at a justifiable system of caste succeeds, the relegation is postponed for a while. But the ultimate end is beyond dispute when castes cause stagnation and outside pressures disruption. These two phenomena, the internal phenomenon of class changing into caste and vice-versa and the external phenomenon of shift in the strength of nations, have been universal to all hitherto known societies.

CLASS AND CASTE

Some may be inclined to think that caste is a specifically Indian phenomenon. In the sense that caste has endured an unbelievably long time, that it has acquired some very sharp features, it is a unique Indian institution. But as an institution in which different classes of population have found their proper place and do not dispute much with one another, it is universal. Classification by birth or its recognition by religion is not a necessary quality of caste. What distinguishes caste from class is immobility that has crept into class relationship, the immobility of an individual to get into a higher caste and of a whole caste to move up in status or income. Class is mobile caste. Caste is immobile class. Every society or civilisation has known this movement from class to caste and vice-versa. This movement is at the root of almost all internal happenings. It is almost always inspired by the demand for justice and equality but the initial demands have hitherto always been corrupted.

In ancient Rome, patricians and plebians were almost always engaged in a class struggle. Whenever Rome grew in strength and economic power, the struggle was permitted comparatively free play and classes could struggle to move up. Whenever this struggle became unbearable to the existence of society and outside pressures grew, the demand for a stable and intelligent order was made in the name of justice and equality. The Roman experience of movement from class to caste and caste to class went through various phases. Caste at one time was used as an instrument for creating the power and wealth of Rome. Class was often the struggling aspiration of the Roman citizen to achieve equality in society. Caste later became an instrument to prevent internal disruption and protect what had been achieved. At the very end, justice could no longer be contained in any achievable order of castes and dis-

ruption followed. All these movements from class to caste and the reverse took place alongside of the Roman effort to achieve efficiency in a limited direction. It may not be forgotten that the Roman latifundia can stand comparison with the most extensive corporation farms of the present day. These latifundia also withered away under their own weight and outside pressures.

India seems to have known two definite movements against caste. The earlier movement appears to have started over 2,600 years ago and continued for nearly five centuries. The literature of the time shows it to have been a movement of criticism and reform. It did cause a certain loosening of castes and a general stirring within the society occurred. Gautam Buddha had at one time to shut his monastic order to indebted persons and to those of the lower castes without the consent of their employers. The shift away from castes was also accompanied by a growth in political strength and economic prosperity. Different Kingdoms of the country tended to get united however loosely so that internecine wars were ended and trade prospered. Artisans multiplied, agriculture improved and the national income grew. One major invasion from Europe of those days was repelled before it could draw near and India sent out religious and cultural missions to distant lands. The extraction of political tribute and rule over others was not in her blood, but she must have traded far and wide and manufactured for such trade. A certain rationality in thinking and general interest and awareness went alongside. Undoubtedly, this movement against caste and for class was accompanied by a growth of partial efficiency in the society as a whole.

Four hundred years had to intervene before the creative energies of Indian society awoke and blossomed into a second movement against caste. The literature of the period shows it to have been a movement of outright condemnation. Caste was denounced on every ground and from all angles. In actual practice, however, there was not such a complete break and much the same partial efficiency of society and general movement of class as in the earlier period was repeated, although in a more developed form.

The intervening period between these two class movements and the phase that seems now to have run out are the counterpart movements of caste. The earlier period seems to have been some-

what mild and unsettled by comparison, for the social scriptures of the time compromise a great deal and seek to achieve caste through a permission, however unwilling and hedged, to move up and down in habits of food and marriage. Indian society of the time was somewhat weak against foreign invasions, although it had not yet lost its capacity to repel and to absorb. The later movement towards caste has lasted a much longer time of over 1200 years. The rigidity of caste patterns is more or less complete in this period. Through a stupendous distinction between absolute truth and wordly truth, Shankaracharya laid down a philosophical basis for reconciling great flights of spirituality with a social order of perfidious dimensions. Foreign invasions and increasing poverty beset Indian society of this period and a total anaemia seizes hold of it. No purpose would be served by blaming this anaemia on the caste system or Shankaracharya's magnificent error.

The source of either evil lies in the attainment of maximum efficiency in a limited direction beyond which Indian society could not go and had inevitably therefore to fall prey to other societies seeking efficiency in a different direction. In a certain measure, caste and the mind that went with it acted as a protecting shield for the hibernating society. That the shield could be forged was as much of a marvel as was the dirt that it covered. It would be idle to speculate whether India would not have done better by disrupting without caste and Shankaracharya than by stagnating with them. The phase anyhow seems to be over. With Mahatma Gandhi has begun a general stirring of Indian castes up and down and a search for efficiency of the society as a whole. But it must not be forgotten that numerous humanist sects of a devotional or philosophical foundation, unbelievably generous in scope, have been his forerunners.

A philosophy of history may well seek to discover a rhythm in these alternations of class and caste and the time-span over which the successions endure. Historical material is yet sketchy for such refinements of what must for a long time stay as a broadly stated theory of India's movement between caste and class. How the specific system of caste known alone to India arose is itself a subject for much speculation. It did indeed achieve an adjustment as miraculous for its enduring acceptability as for the inevitable sloth

that spread over the society. The adjustment appears still more miraculous when note is taken of the widely differing pigments and cephalic indexes that were adjusted; the most egalitarian civilisation known to man has so far shied away from such an attempt. But it took place largely on the religious and spiritual levels and the social level suffered increasing mal-adjustment in the recentmost period of caste. Not only has injustice multiplied, but the identification of certain castes with tribal and facial characteristics, that have tended to sharpen in the phase of general inefficiency and poverty, has made the abolition of castes stubbornly difficult.

The integration attempted in India's caste system was however of such matchless dimension that no factor of race, language, religion, colour or form could ever intimidate. In this breath-taking drama of human adjustment played out within India's frontiers may well lie the source of her famed tolerance as also her emotionally satisfying self-concern and distaste of imperialism. While this saga of India's movement back and forth between class and caste may reveal many gleams of a diamond, the outstanding glitter must not be missed. Internal caste and external decline go together, whatever may be the time-lag between the two. Increasing efficiency of society as a whole is invariably accompanied by internal stirring of various classes up and down.

The American social scene is often misunderstood and observers, native and foreign, question the existence of a class system in America. Such a misunderstanding arises from the confusion of class with caste. The older social groups of Europe have never quite been able to leave the taint of caste. Even in times of great mobility of classes moving up, democratic behaviour and intermarriage have not been easy or natural in Europe. There has been such fast moving up of the individual and the class in America and the attendant democratic relationships right up to eating and marrying habits that the existence of classes is somewhat obscured to those who confuse them with caste. Aside from such marginal groups as the Boston brahmins and, indeed, the almost tribal distinction between the Negro and the White, caste does not exist in America. But classes do. These differ, one from another, in their income, power and status and, what is more, they struggle to move up both in status and income.

As long as such an internal movement for the removal of inequality continues in a society, class-structure and the attendant class struggle exist. That this class struggle has been able to win victories of the escalator clause and annual increments and aspires to achieve a guaranteed annual wage irrespective of employment is indeed a tribute to the country's trade unionism but more so to the expansive capacity of American economy. Someday, however, technical efficiency will reach its maximum and a deadlock will be reached.

Aside from outside pressures of other societies reaching efficiency in their own directions, internal class movement will then become unbearable. The American people will, like every other people, be placed before the choice between disruption and caste and even if they should succeed in attaining a system of castes, their relegation will only be a matter of time. Already, union meetings are singularly like caste meetings and the solidarity aroused is not that of the working-class as a whole but of workers in a particular craft or industry. The solidarity is not yet natural and has to be bolstered up with songs and other devices of a jarring character. This solidarity appears today to be an aggressive weapon for mobility but it should not take much time to change it into a protective shield. American social thinking, like its European counterpart, has already thrown up such vague and caste-laden concepts as 'areas of agreement', 'exclusion of agreed areas from reach of politics', 'co-operative and employee society', 'functional status' and the like. They can come in handy at the appropriate time. Meanwhile it must be recognised that the youth and vitality and also the aggression of American economy is matched well with the youth and vitality and also the aggression with which America's classes have moved away from caste and cleaned themselves almost wholly of its taint.

Modern European history has romped over the surface of the earth with the majesty of power and it has equally been a swing away from the castes of around 700 years ago. The serf bound to his master has been replaced by the freed peasant or the hired labourer on farms. Guilds of artisans with their caste rules of apprenticeship and admission were steadily broken down and have been replaced by the industrial factory with its labourers moving up and down the scale. To the professional classes, talent has gone from the whole population through a system of free education or scholar-

ships. As a consequence of democracy, political power has somewhat drained from its earlier receptacles to parties of the common man, trade unions and the like. In the realms of the mind, science has continually wrested secrets from nature but has also as often disclosed to view darkness where there was supposed to be light. Rationality has become the base for the larger part of systematic thinking and the European man has achieved a social dignity unknown to earlier periods. But Europe has now ceased to straddle across the earth; the majesty of its power is at any rate bowed. Technological advance is reaching a deadlock and preparations for war are making too heavy a demand to permit rising standards of living. The struggle among classes is becoming unbearable or futile. Men hanker after the stability of justice rather than risk disruption attained in place of desired equality. The larger part of Europe wants to fix social design, sanctified by reason or religion, in which every man will find his status and fixed income, where there will be no dispute nor quarrel.

Recentmost Europe has given birth to two such movements, the Hitler movement in Germany and the communist movement in Russia. These two movements have ordinarily been understood to be antagonistic of each other. They have indeed been so. But I venture to think that both these movements are similarly motivated in regard to the internal oscillation between class and caste. When the struggle amongst classes in Germany became insupportable and strikes kept on mounting, when relationships among armed forces, industry, the free professions, students, workers and farmers became so strained that it was not possible to run the economy or government smoothly, the national socialist movement came along to achieve a system of caste in which various classes seemed to be co-ordinated in a new and intelligent scheme, or at any rate a scheme which appeared to be intelligent to Germans of that time. An essential criterion is that this scheme must appear to be intelligent to the people of its time and that classes struggling for supremacy must accept it intellectually in order to cease their struggle. When this struggle amongst classes in Germany became unbearable and German society was threatened with internal disruption, the national socialist movement essayed to fix up the different classes into castes with their proportionate and fixed incomes and well-defined status. It showed them that their various orders were so co-ordinated as

to yield a meaning and purpose of life no matter that this purpose had no enduring or religious quality and was narrowly national. It was essentially a caste movement. Class struggle in Europe has probably developed in such a fashion and has taken place inside a complex of civilisation, internally egalitarian and externally imperialist, that the achievement of caste is no longer possible. At any rate, Germany tried it and failed.

That the Russian effort is also a caste effort may be difficult of acceptance by persons superficially influenced by communist theory. They may think that it is an effort to destroy classes. That is largely a matter of how one examines the evidence coming out of Russia. The national socialist may well have pointed out that the kind of socialist integration attempted in his society and the corporate system that he was trying to introduce into Germany also did away with classes. Were not industrialists fixed in their income? They could not command more than 5 or 6 per cent of their profits. They were curtailed in their powers and status. If it is a question of what men say about their own system, Russian Communism is indeed based upon the destruction of classes. But if we have studied human history, the suspicion should not be so lightly cast aside that whenever a society has found the struggle amongst classes insupportable it has tried to fix itself up in a system of caste. That these castes have been fixed at various levels is also undisputed. In India the caste fixed highest in her ancient integration was perhaps amongst the lowest paid or at any rate not as well paid as the second and third castes? There have been integrations known to mankind where the highest caste in status was not necessarily the richest. These fixations have taken place at various levels.

Status and income have often got disjointed and, if one is to think of the communist slogan "to every body according to his needs and from everybody according to his capacity", such adages abound in the writings of India's ancient sages and Marx after all was a modern sage. Whether this formula ever got worked out in the Indian caste system is more than I can say. It is sought to be worked out in the communist system although, for the time being, they say they have sacrificed it in favour of another which gives to everyone according to his labour. No matter what formula is enunciated, the fact remains that, inside Russia, various groups of

toilers have got fixed up in their status and their incomes. It is not possible for them to struggle for changes in adjustment. What changes in adjustment may occur will occur from top. Furthermore, no such changes in adjustment will be possible after a time except such as may flow out of increase in the total income and do not cause disproportion. It may well be that the communist system puts an end to the struggle amongst classes, not so as to abolish all classes, but to create new castes whose status and incomes are fixed. If these two movements of recent European history, the Hitler and the communist movement, are an effort of the tormented and harried soul of Europe to end internal disharmony by achieving the harmony of caste, none should be surprised. It is a warning to those who have been infatuated and rightly so with the magical charm of abolition of classes that they should not make the mistake of creating castes over again in their effort to abolish classes.

The Russian endeavour at caste is somewhat different from that of Germany. The German effort to achieve caste arose out of the need to protect a highly developed economy against an unbearable class struggle. It may also have been an answer to the need of German economy for outside sustenance. The Russian system of castes has probably arisen out of the need to create a highly industrial economy from an agricultural one, which may not have been possible in the climate of sharp class struggles. It may not be forgotten that Russia has a very low density of population compared to her lands and resources and the possibilities of creation are therefore enormous. Whether this slight difference between protective caste and creative caste is significant enough to help Russia change later into a system of classes can be anybody's guess, even assuming that she succeeds in developing her economy and outside pressures do not cancel her efforts. Furthermore, communist Russia is also exhibiting among other obnoxious features of caste the particularly odious characteristic of untouchability. If India's untouchables number nearly twenty percent of the population, those of Russia inside correction and concentration camps have ranged between 5 and 10 percent. The Russian untouchability is not the result of assimilation of totally foreign elements, as may have been the case in India. Whatever may have been its cause, it serves the pitilessly grand design of using human labour at cheapest

costs for economic reconstruction. That the Russian system is more glaringly cruel than the Indian is largely deceptive, for time and religion may have rubbed off its sharper edges in India and, by making caste acceptable even to those who suffer, driven its cruelty underground into a pervasive but concealed virus.

An Indian should be perfectly familiar with the phenomenon of class solidifying into caste. It has shown itself throughout the ages and is showing itself in Europe right now. Whether the European soul would be able to evolve yet another system of castes is another matter. Its efforts may fail. A civilisation based on a permanent technological revolution may find it exceedingly difficult to accustom its people to a stable hierarchy of life. Even if declining efficiency and technological deadlock should incline European society to caste, the long tradition of egalitarian struggles would prove too stubborn to break. But the weakening capacity to wage war could incline either way, to seek remedy either in the effort towards caste or in heightened struggles for equality among classes. Then, the European civilisation would be relegated, would disrupt or be overpowered by another more powerful. When the internal struggle becomes unbearable, the trend to caste begins and none should ever confuse the phenomenon of achievement of castes with that of the abolition of classes. I am as keen about the abolition of classes as anybody can be, but I am fearful that under the cover of abolition of classes, castes have ever been created. All human history hitherto has been an internal movement between castes and classes, between classes solidifying into castes and castes loosening into classes.

Those who wish to abolish all classes and castes in society must get hold of this motive of human history and, after grasping it, devise such endeavours as may put an end to both. History by itself will not do so. There is no automatic motion. India has so long stayed in a state of torpor and stagnation arising out of caste that her new found vitality is loosening her castes into classes and the struggle for removal of internal inequality has begun. Whether any faulty thinking such as the bodily taking over of European thought, capitalist or communist, will arrest the process of loosening of castes into classes is more than I can say. Such European thought, capitalist or communist, if swallowed wholesale

without any internal examination of how it arose and under what conditions, may well attack the emerging vitality in India of our age at the source. A caste structure may emerge in which the political party, the managerial class and the professional class are all fixed in their superior places and the rest of the populace is divided up into the hierarchical groups of a lower order.

CONTINENTAL SHIFTS

Internal oscillation between class and caste has been tied up with alternations happening outside the contours of a society or a civilisation. For, alongside of this struggle of classes has gone a struggle among nations. Prosperity and power have regularly shifted from age to age. No people has ever rested supreme on the pinnacles of history. The people of India have also sat on such pinnacles of history. For the last two hundred years and more they have been down in the dust. During these three hundred years the peoples of Europe have commanded the peaks of history. Power and prosperity have always shifted from region to region. Externally, all human history has hitherto been a history of regional or continental shift of power and prosperity. If Europe has for the last three hundred years been the prince among continents, India was that in history perhaps twice but once definitely. Greece, Rome, China, Arabia and, in a measure, Mexico have also sat on such pinnacles. A rise and fall is characteristic of all social groups and civilisations. There has been no going away from it so far.

All human history hitherto has been an internal oscillation between class and caste and an external shift of prosperity and power from one region to another. This external shift and internal oscillation are related to one another. When a historical group has risen to power and prosperity and great attainments, there has been a loosening of castes and an approach towards internal equality, a struggle amongst classes within manageable proportions but a struggle nevertheless. Each class tries to better its lot and achieve a status which may embody equality between man and man. With decline in the total complex of a society, the struggle among classes takes such shape that a just order is believed to be more egalitarian than the existing disruption. Whether or not a just system of castes is achieved, stagnation must at some stage set in

and the relegation of that society is certain after one or more efforts. With external increase in power and prosperity, internal inequality decreases, whereas with decrease in such power internal inequality increases. A caste structure begins to operate.

Ingredients in the total historical situation at any time are class and caste on the inside and rising or declining power on the outside. Any society looked at from the outside is in a state of permanent relationship, advantageous or unfavourable, with other societies and civilisations. Looked at from the inside, it is continually revolving between caste and class. The connecting link between these two motions, internal and external, of a society is supplied by the state of its organisational and technical efficiency. Every society hitherto has been able to practice efficiency alone in a specific and limited direction, however much it may have deluded itself that it was practising total efficiency. On the state of its efficiency depends the character of its internal and external motions. When a civilisation is tending towards maximum efficiency and until sometime after, it is in a state of rising power in its relationship to the outside world. Such a rising power may or may not mean drawing of sustenance from other societies; in most cases, it does. At any rate, it keeps foreigners away from the temptation to attack it and is able to repel their attacks should they foolishly venture into them. Sometime after maximum efficiency has been reached, a civilisation begins to decline in its relationship with other societies. It falls a prey to their lust, or, very rarely, is permitted to stagnate in comparative isolation. In either event it is unable to cope with the requirements of the internal and the external motions. No society has hitherto been able to change the initial direction of its efficiency once that has been set. Human intelligence has so far been unable to grasp the requirements of total efficiency or efficiency in all directions.

Until sometime after maximum efficiency has been attained, a society is deeply stirred and the clamour for equality keeps growing. This clamour is satisfied upto a point. Allround equality has indeed never yet been attained, nor even equality in the limited spheres where a growing civilisation seeks it. But the condition of increasing efficiency and rising power and prosperity that goes with it enables a growing civilisation to satisfy some of the internal

stirrings for better living and greater equality. Even if the relative ratios in the earnings and status of various classes do not tend towards equality, an absolute increase is effected. This increase keeps up the appearance of internal approximation and equality within a society and, in the sphere of minimum needs of life such as food and clothing, the appearance is substantially real. When absolute increases in earnings and status of different classes in a society can no longer be effected due to a deadlock or decline in its efficiency, the claim of equality cannot be met except through encroachments of lower classes upon the higher. Such encroachments are possible up to a point. This may be the phase of the highest internal approximation within a civilisation. But the limit is soon reached and class struggle then assumes disruptive proportions. At this point, earnest effort is made to restore the disturbed harmony and justice becomes the supreme ideal of the time. Without pressing claims of justice, orderly living becomes improbable and insecurity prevails. If the sense of justice prevalent in a society is able to evolve an intelligent order of castes where the earlier notions of equality are frozen into a hierarchy of earnings and status, its civilisation may still endure for a while. But such a stability contains within it at its very inception the seed of sloth. Stagnation or relegation of a civilisation so matured becomes inevitable until such time that it seeks a new direction of efficiency and its creative energies are re-awakened.

Class is the expression of the urge towards equality. Caste is the expression of the urge towards justice. Equality is the more natural and vigorous urge, while justice is a comparatively stimulated urge. But these urges are not played out within a vacuum. They are expressed within the context of a society that rises and declines. In such a context, equality must inevitably degenerate into disruption and justice into stagnation. From equality to class and then to disruption, which releases the counterpart process of justice to caste to sloth and back again to equality is the full circle of human destiny in any civilisation. Man's fate swings between equality and justice, between vigour and stability and is cursed by the violence of the one and the decay of the other. It need not be repeated that this destiny is played out on the stage of a rising or declining civilisation and there is perpetual interaction between the two. If a rising civilisation hastens the egalitarian advent of classes, the

latter in turn further invigorates and matures the former. If the violence of class struggle hastens the decline of a civilisation, the latter in turn adds to the former. Similarly, in regard to caste, there is an inter-action between the stagnation of caste and the ultimate decline of civilisation.

Is man ever fated to witness this rise and fall of civilisations and to see spread before him an eternal desert of history and also to swing like a monkey from the branch of class to the branch of caste? Some philosophers of history have tried to pump faith into mankind by hinting that cycles of experience are repeated at creatively and not at passively recurrent levels. A graphic phrase is here brought into service for a rational argument. The faith of a nervous spirituality is made to do for a robust reason. There is not much difference between the creatively recurrent levels of recent historians and the lineal or broken progress of materialist interpreters. History shows little evidence for such a faith. Its cycles are indeed repeated at different levels. But there is no evidence to qualify this difference of levels as creative or progressive. The classes of ancient India or Rome and the classes of modern Europe and of the entire human world of their respective times are different but not creatively different from one another. Similarly, the castes of India or China and the attempted castes of Germany or Russia and of the entire human world of their time are different but not creatively different from one another. To describe this difference in swinging cycles as an ascent from feudal to socialist civilisation is just as fantastic as to imagine in modern technological progress a world without poverty.

In spite of all the difference in the quality of civilisations that historical destiny has decreed, poverty of body and misery of mind are as great today as ever before in history. Enormous masses of people numbering a billion and more, nearly two-thirds of world's population, live a submerged life. Whether increase in population and consequent decrease in available land or some other factor has done it, is a matter of detail. These submerged colonials of a capitalist civilisation would laugh themselves dead if they were told of their progress from earlier and backward ages or classes. A damaging mistake in the creation or understanding of history lies in confusing partial with total efficiency as also in imagining

conditions that obtain in one part of the earth as universal over its entire surface. Let not the hitherto arid deserts of history produce mirages or dream-like gardens that the mind's eye can see growing out of seeds yet to be planted. The levels at which cycles of human history are repeated are indeed different, but human intelligence alone can make them creatively different. At decisive turns of human fate, it has perhaps always had the choice between partial and total efficiency. A decisive turn is once again there and so is the choice. To have understood the internal swing between class and caste and the external shift of rising and falling civilisation is to have gone some way towards the abolition of classes and castes and of the marching deserts of history.

Western civilisation which has reached its obstruction and may be nearing its debacle is suffering a shift of prosperity and power. Western Europe is no longer the prince among continents. The U. S. A. has become that and the U. S. S. R. is threatening rivalry. The shift towards Asia and the Pacific is somewhat deeper. Furthermore, the effort to achieve a system of caste, specially in Western Europe of declining power, is becoming fairly significant. Precious little hope can be held out to mankind for the achievement either of one world or a classless society. A golden age from which poverty and war have been eliminated and in which man would have found the meaning of life and secured a design of living so as to achieve internal satisfaction and external peace seems to be an old illusion.

Had it not been for another motor present in human development, I admit that this interpretation would disclose a dismal picture of human destiny, dismal at least as far as achieving the secret of life through history is concerned and not necessarily in the sense that one may not altogether discover the meaning of life. It may well be that not in history alone lies the key to the meaning of life. The key to the meaning of life may have to be found outside of history. Such a view would nevertheless be dismal as far as historical development is concerned and it would be a cyclical view. It would mean that ages and climes keep on revolving and alternating between power or prosperity and poverty or hibernation. We could not intelligently look forward to a future in which all mankind would so co-ordinate itself as to put an end to the external struggle among

nations and the internal struggle among classes. The third motor of historical development leaves some hope that the meaning of life may perhaps upto a point though not fully be found in history.

The rise and fall of peoples and civilisations has ever taken place and, as students of history, we must have all concerned ourselves with the rise of the British Empire, the fall of the Pharoah Empire, the rise of the Gupta Kingdom and the fall of the Roman Empire and so forth and must have enumerated their causes. Everyone forgets the various causes that he is taught at school. They seem to be very numerous and at the time one studies them appear to have some point in them but ultimately when one begins to think of them and the rise and fall of civilisations or empires, they make less meaning with regard to the ultimate factor motivating history than the answer given by the Marxist twenty years ago at the Berlin conversation. When the causes of the fall of a state are enumerated we are taught of internal jealousy and rivalry, the absence of any social cohesion, fanaticism and so forth. I believe that I could make a uniform list of causes for the fall of every Kingdom and every civilisation. Internal jealousies and fanaticism and some kind of indolence or luxury and social disintegration would be the inevitable causes enumerated. But then what is this fanaticism, internal disintegration, rivalry and luxury due to ? Why is it that the later Roman emperors tended to live a life of luxury ? Why is the life of the Nawab of Oudh an inventory in items of luxury, some unsurpassed before or later ? When a civilisation is falling, there is no sense nor purpose left in living. With the outside pressure from other societies increasing and the helpless foreboding of doom, old styles of life become irksome and discipline is bereft of joy. The vigour of class turns into debauchery and the stability of caste into indolence and each man is left with a vulgar impulse towards pleasure or aggrandisement. The root cause of all the factors in the fall of civilisations lies in the character of internal as well as external motions of a society that has reached maximum efficiency and can go no further and must like the monstrous reptiles of nature, fall under its own weight or outside pressure. To cultivate on the deserts of history the undying base of fragrant grass-lands, on which each age and clime could grow the flowers of its choice, would be to reveal the secret of total efficiency as distinct from a partial though maximum efficiency.

In the revelation of this secret, a third motor of human development is of decisive consequence. While class and caste have chased each other and the power of a society has simultaneously risen or declined, mankind has ever been caught in the process of physical and cultural approximation. Growing societies have by conquest or, in rare cases, the appeal of their example tended to unite the human race. Such a union has never hitherto been intelligently designed, and it has largely been an unconscious or unwilling result of other forces. It has also never yet spread over the whole of humanity, for its carrier has always been a single people or civilisation whose energies peter out when a stage of fulfilment corresponding to its strength has been reached.

APPROXIMATION OF MANKIND

Amongst the most remarkable processes of physical and cultural approximation known to man has been that of which the Indian people was the carrier. Our great ancestors and presumably sometimes, ancestresses travelled far and wide and made of the climes where they went their home and were not bothered with dead conventions and rituals. They exist no more, for they have left no distinct progeny. But in the process of disappearing, they have re-appeared in a million-fold ways in those among whom they lived and loved. They have turned themselves into what Sanskrit has so graphically described as seed-blood. Over all East Asia from north to south can be seen numerous populations on whose visage is spread the stamp of India. In the Lumbini Park of Bangkok, as elsewhere, an Indian traveller of today frequently stumbles into a girl or a boy who is definitely a progeny of some Indian ancestor of over 1500 years ago, who talks a language unintelligible to him but full of immigrant words from his own language, and who revives in him memories of an old tale as difficult to forget as to recall in detail. What Indian boy has not been told by his grand-mother of bewitching beauties in the east, in the hills of Assam, in Burma and beyond who ensnare a man and turn him into a buffalo and hold him tied up in their homes. Some race memories of an old jealousy are obviously transmitted in this tale. A philosopher of history may fondly wonder if ever such pleasant jealousies would become universal and alive and a portion of the male and the female fate all over the earth. I am proud of these ancestors who were carriers of human approximation but not imperialists. But pride is itself an antidote to approximation. It leads not to an approximation of the human race but to an artificial assimilation of portions of mankind with the people who have the means to be proud. We may, therefore, hasten to recall that practically every major race on earth has sometime or the other

had the means to be proud and has been a carrier of physical and cultural approximation. All mankind has reason to be proud of this process and, in equal pride, to will what has hitherto taken place without design.

It is as well to think of the golden hoop of the Sanskrit language with its various sisters and daughters, Prakrit and Pali, which unites all South Asia and, to a lesser extent, other parts of Asia as well. Whether in Jakarta or Bangkok, one stumbles into words such as 'Pradhan Mantri' or 'Panch Shila' or 'Rathmanu' and the wife and children of a socialist near Sourabaya, with whom I broke bread, were named Rukmavati, Padmavati, Dharmavan, Yuddha-ninsa, and they were a Muslim family. Rathmanu is incidentally the name of a most significant memorial, which the Thai people have erected in memory of their revolution of 1932. It is a stone pillar, a short one, in the centre of the main street of Bangkok, and on it rests a book in stone, which is their Constitution, and Rath Manu is quite obviously the result of a long distance migration of Rashtra Manu, the nation's law-giver. Such altered emigrants into South Asian languages are far more numerous than those which have retained their original sound. This causes one to speculate whether cultural approximation, by itself and without designed aids, is not at once a centrifugal and a centripetal process. Over in Tokyo it may not be possible to see such traces in face or language but the gigantic images of Gautam Buddha in Kamakura and Nara remind us of those glorious times when India presided over the commingling of races and cultures not in a militaristic way but in other ways. It was a spread alright. This process of physical and cultural approximation among different parts of mankind has gone on whether through conquest or out of very close relationships, particularly where two states meet. Frontiers are naturally very exciting even to this day because it is there that races meet. They meet in war and in love and even war ultimately leads to love, at least it did so in the past.

This account of how the Indian portion of mankind and its culture spread eastwards right upto the north in Japan and brought about a certain approximation between itself and the peoples inhabiting those regions, physically as well as culturally, should recall that a similar process has been going on in all parts of the world and

practically every race has been its carrier. The Arabic language for instance is a basic ingredient of almost all the Negro languages of Africa and Alexandria had been a meeting place of races for twenty centuries and more. In those regions, whether Alexandria or Cairo or Nicosia, one is struck by the multitudinous treasure of faces and is tenderly reminded of numerous strands and races that must have mixed up. Where two rivers meet there, according to Indian tradition, stands a pilgrimage. Where two or more races meet, there should stand a pilgrimage, for the process of physical and cultural approximation of mankind has taken place on that site.

Other languages too had their spread. The Aramic language in which Christ spoke may not have had its spread as a language but as a script it went far and wide. Aside from Greek and Latin which exist to this day in their direct progenies and have entered like seed-blood into many modern languages, the spread of the English language has indeed been phenomenal. But the error of singling out this latest spread should not be made, for what appears to loom so large as a contemporary happening may after all be the repetition of similar events that look smaller because of distance. In addition to the realms of blood and language, approximation has taken place in other spheres of man's existence, in ideas and religion, in techniques of production as well as of living. The spread of the three great proselytising religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, has almost girdled the world. A warning must here be sounded as in the case of migrating words which change their shape and sound. If the human race has ever tended to draw together in numberless ways, it has also dispersed and taken on increasing distinctions with the passage of time.

Much speculation still attends the original homes of the major races and their dispersal far and wide and their encounters with one another. Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe that these dispersals have made many of one, that they have transformed a single group of basic unity into many groups of dissimilar character. There are several Mongolian or Aryan or Negroid groups today, while, at one time, there was only one of each. Is it then not wishful thinking to blur these processes of division while concentrating attention on those of reunion? A tested theory must indeed bide its time until historical evidence has been collected.

A legitimate speculation may however be made. The human race appears to have lived in its early dawn in a few big prisons without communications with one another. These prisons may have been spread over vast areas but they were bounded at that time by unscalable walls of granite. In each of these prisons lived a portion of the human race in splendid isolation. They must have smelled raw, though some would like to romanticise them as pure and unadulterated.

When the human race, held incommunicado with one another, finally broke out of its prisons, it ran wild with joy or fear, made adventures of discovery and of history and seemingly divided itself further. But these divisions may well have been the only available lover's ladder for a possible reunion of the future. Each hop and halt did indeed make for a fresh division but the next hop or the one after it brought a scouting contingent face to face with its counterpart from another race that had similarly broken out from its prison. The strangers, who had probably not even dreamed of one another, met, gave a puzzled greeting and talked with their eyes and hands. The process of physical and cultural approximation began in however small a way. From this first start to ideological spreads beginning from Akhnaton of the ancient Egyptians or the Upanishads over Confucius or Kant to Gandhi of modern India is indeed a long passage of time but also an equally long history of approximations. The list of approximations in techniques of production and living or in articles of use would be inexhaustible. Dacca muslin went as far in the world of its time as the American nylon does today. Wyatt's technique of mechanical spinning and weaving has undergone successive refinements and today covers the surface of the earth. If Hollywood is a laboratory where make-up approximates one face to another with many comedies of mistaken identities, the whole wide world is becoming the field of its experiments. Nevertheless, gunpowder probably still holds the record in the fastest spread of an article.

It has become a truism to speak of the annihilation of distances by the automobile, wireless and the aeroplane. Whether or not the thick blanket of clouds over which men fly in their aeroplanes and the standardised hotel annihilate any distances between peoples, there is not a country in the world which does not make use of these

techniques of transport and communication. In all historical ages, men have tended to approximate to one another in styles and language, in articles of use and processes of manufacture, in ideas and religion but always without the bounds of yesterday's frontiers and today's hinterlands whom poverty has struck. Let not the vain thought disfigure the mind that any one people was the carrier of this process. It was a part of human development, whenever any particular people grew and achieved, it seemed to take itself to other regions and get incorporated with them and simultaneously take something from them and bring it back to its own country. This has been going on since the dawn of history.

In the cultural sphere, I have come across some contemporary examples of this process. The Indonesian part of our world used to know of a dance called the Ronggen. Such Indians as have lived with the Bhils and other forest dwellers must have seen teams of men and women ever separate, probably because it would not yet be the proper thing in India for a man to touch a woman or for a woman to touch a man, face each other and advance and withdraw and dance about. Ronggen used to be a fairly sensuous dance, so I am told, but a dance to which the family could go. It got transported anyhow to the United States of America and although it did not quite separate the dancing couple it did cause an alternating closeness and distance. This dance is called the Boogie Woogie. It has now come back to Singapore as Joget Modern and is probably the most sensuous dance that the world knows. The man does not touch the woman and they both keep apart but there are such sensuous movements when they move towards each other and then they recede and the whole thing goes on. Two entirely separate beings but the magnetic and unashamed sensuality of that dance holds them together in a vice of a circle that is ever shifting its site. The Muslim faith might have something to do with such a development. The people would probably like to take the pleasure of the dance without having to violate their faith. But if this process of approximation continues, other developments may ensue.

Bali possesses the unique Gamelan which is a series of brass instruments and is found in every village of the island and whose orchestra may consist of fifty persons and more, musicians ranging from the age of ten to perhaps seventy, without notations or a conductor.

This treasured Gamelan is now being used in Den Passen, the big town of Bali, for advertising Hollywood films. That too is a part of the process of cultural approximation, although an unfortunate one. To the sonorous tingle of Gamelan, much still takes place in Bali and the woman of the island except in the big coastal towns sways her shapely but covered hips and her rounded but uncovered breasts, rounded perhaps because they are uncovered. The towns are however laying down the fashion and the wife of the governor of Bali appeared shocked at my reverie that such unthinking imitations of foreign modes are not an unmixed gain. The time-lag in some cultural approximations may only have caused the native and the foreign to change places. Perhaps by the time the American women go about sporting a well-formed breast, at least in the sunnier climes of California, the women of Bali will have covered their sagging ones beneath a quarter dozen different sheets called blouses. This may appear to some to be a rather frivolous aspect of history, but how many persons remember what foreign minister or prime minister said twenty centuries ago and in which country. Big generals are probably remembered for five or ten centuries. The great prophets of religion are of course peerless. But, as far as battles, warriors and statesmen go, when all of them have faded away, what remains is the face in Bangkok or the image in Nara or Chinatown in San Francisco or the Egyptian obelisk in Paris, because this is the basic residue of history. What remains is the meeting of races and peoples and the coming together of their cultures and also of their bodies.

This physical and cultural approximation has known limits, for none of the efforts hitherto made has been able to spread so as to cover the whole world. Greek or Sanskrit or Aramic or Arabic has each spread from time to time but never so as to encompass the earth. Various cultures have spread to their West or to their East and in other directions and brought numerous peoples under their control but never the whole world. Some may therefore think that this process of physical and cultural approximation is destined to be limited and never to reach world wide application. That would have been so if the ways open to mankind were those of conquest alone or of any one culture spreading unilaterally. In former times, it was largely conquests, often militaristic conquests, sometimes, also ideological, which brought about the approximation of

one people to another. But the stage is now set for a willed approximation in which no one group need be subjugated by another and by which all the peoples of the world might through intelligent design try to achieve a multi-coloured harmony of the human race. What is possible is however not necessary.

INTERNAL APPROXIMATION

In addition to the external approximation between two or more peoples, an internal approximation within a nation has also taken place. Inequality has undoubtedly existed since the dawn of history but man's desire to achieve equality has perhaps been of equally long standing. And, in various parts of Europe, the extent of equality achieved internally is astounding. Swedish socialism has been able to bring most incomes within a minimum-maximum ratio of one to twenty. The salary of Sweden's prime minister is less than five times the minimum salary of a street-cleaner or scavenger. The law relating to a house servant that she must have a room of her own, prevalent in most of Western Europe, is a fair index of this internal approximation. Even in capitalist America, the wages of a locomotive driver and a secretary in a state government are about equal. The concept of the welfare state has further reinforced internal approximation. Through a system of unemployment insurance, child and old age pensions, food subsidies, free medicine, municipal housing and abundant university scholarships, the Western state has rightly laid claim to being a welfare state and has undoubtedly made one citizen the comparative equal of another. The idea however is not so unique. The Roman state was also deeply concerned with the plentiful supply of bread and circus to its citizens. The modern state has only extended the old Roman idea into all spheres of minimum needs and generosity or fellow-feeling has become a somewhat stronger ingredient in these policies than the need to appease. An awakened populace in a growing civilisation is by nature clamorous and social conscience in such times is generous. No matter what the incipient caste system of Soviet Russia has done in the other spheres of body and spirit, the extent of internal approximation reached in Russia in the two spheres of mass medicine and primary education is unexcelled. Russia may lay rightful claim to providing ordinary

medical care and primary education to a mass of its citizens in a way unsurpassed elsewhere, although its specialized knowledge and skills in medicine and its university instruction leave much to be desired.

The process of internal approximation in the sense of one citizen becoming the comparative equal of another has made remarkable strides in the white states of modern civilisation, the spheres of unmatched excellence may vary from state to state. Nevertheless, such internal approximations of the welfare state are strictly confined to the rich white states and the coloured states may at best talk about them deceptively. In a condition of submerging poverty, the populace is too dulled to clamour and social conscience too costly to be generous, until the creative energies of the peoples are re-awakened to seek a new social foundation. Inequality varies in inverse ratio with prosperity; the more prosperous a nation, the less the inequality amongst its citizens. Poverty and inequality march together, for they are both derived from a relegated civilisation and a hardened conscience. To possess an alert social conscience in conditions of extreme poverty is spiritually consuming and materially beyond the means. Processes of internal approximation are therefore confined to civilisations which are still reaching their maximum organisational efficiency or are not long past that stage. Modern civilisation has been achieving an approximation among different classes that live within the frontiers of the master states. To this drawing near of men and women in the sense of not being too different socially, frontiers are of the utmost importance, for the concept of an increasing standard of living which is so peculiar to modern civilisation has been operating alone within national frontiers.

In Europe today, it would be difficult to tell a duchess from a skivvy and a laundress from the prime minister's daughter. From pavement cafes in Paris, one can for hours and hours look at the people who pass along without being bored but without being able to tell who was who, for they are all so chic and elegant. Even in India laundresses and sweepresses are as beautiful as any other women but clothes matter a great deal and they make all the difference. Europe shows a comparative equality in clothes, unless a minute examination of the material used is possible. On the streets of

Stockholm, a workman is an exceedingly rare sight, for he is neatly dressed. The extent of social and economic equality obtaining in Europe makes it possible to confer on almost every single European the dignity of a human being. This approximation therefore, has taken place among peoples not only in relation to language, cultural modes and racial mixtures, but also in the direction of social equality within a nation.

At one point in history there were three great men who thought and acted almost simultaneously, Buddha, Socrates and Confucius. But it took their peoples and their followers several centuries before any got to know of the other. That problem too has been eliminated. If there were three such great thinkers today trying to work out the destiny of the world not according to old traditional methods but in some new way, they would meet at least through correspondence. But obstacles still inhere. The voice of that man is likely to dominate whose country had the largest number of factories and atom bombs. In spite of this limitation, it would be possible today, through intelligent and willed design, to complete the process of physical and cultural approximation both inside nation and externally among the peoples of the world. As a younger man, I used to think that I would, before I die, be able to see a world of Mulattos, of half-breeds. We are all half-breeds, though of a somewhat ancient pedigree, for the crossing took place a long time ago. Current mulattos find it a little difficult to secure the approval of half-breeds of an ancient lineage. Did not one of India's sages however define caste as comprising of those who can produce children of one another, Brahmin or Bhangi, white or Negro ? They can all produce children of one another and should the passion for physical approximation seize mankind and this simultaneous adventure in the realms of spirit and body become increasingly the yearning of man and woman, an enduring basis for a golden age and the peace of the world will have been found. Whether this ever happens or not, other processes of physical and cultural approximation now showing themselves can be of decisive consequence.

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CURRENT DREAMS

Some ideas are already current, which though not yet politically decisive, may become so in the future. It is not possible today for an Indian to vote an American president or Russian premier out of power. His vote is restricted to the choice of his own rulers. Similarly, for a Russian or an American it is not possible to vote an Indian premier out of office. His vote is restricted to the choice of his own rulers. We live under democracies and totalitarianisms which make frequent wars. These wars decide our fate far more than anything which we can do internally. And yet no one has a voice in this matter of war and peace which is largely decided in regions and by peoples over which one has no control. This applies to citizens of all states from the mightiest to the lowliest. The adult vote, when it is there, is too dismally restricted. It is a national vote. No people has got the right to assert itself except through force or subterfuge over the destinies of other peoples so that questions of war and peace are decided not through a universal human vote but a restricted national vote. An insistent demand is being put forward that every single citizen in the world must have a vote that will say something about how America or Russia or India or another country is ruled, atleast in some matters.

World Government, if it ever came, would not be able to take up all subjects, not even the greater part of action normally under a government's control, but one could easily define a minimum list of subjects to be transferred to the authority of a world government responsible to a world parliament. This world parliament of limited powers elected on the basis of adult franchise may indeed have to be weighted because of national and regional considerations. There may either be an upper house of equal representation to all nations of the earth or the single house of the peoples may itself be weighted so as to allay fears against countries of enormous population

and to take some account of existing realities of power. All governments that exist today, because they are national, are a tyranny against the background of unity of the human race. National governments must ever exist, for a world government that would abolish them would itself become a tyrannical monstrosity, even world government would therefore confine itself to matters of war and peace, to relevant aspects of armed forces and foreign policy and to a minimum of economic subjects necessary for the basic health of the world. With the background of such a world government, national governments would no longer divide tyrannously the human race and democracy would for the first time come into free play. The adult vote in the most perfect of democracies must stay circumscribed as long as national vanities or genuine considerations of security offer scope for demagoguery and violence.

A civilisation without the concept of world government by consent, and all civilisations have hitherto lacked such a concept, must by nature travel the path of maximum efficiency in the particular direction of its initial choice in place of total efficiency. The adult vote must ever remain a national vote for many purposes, but, as it is rapidly becoming a sovereign municipal or village vote in large spheres of collective action, it may in time become a world vote in the limited domain of peace and prosperity. Government of the people by the people for the people will be possible for the first time on earth when government of the commune by the commune for the commune on the one hand and government of mankind by mankind for mankind on the other are brought into existence. Whether the process of physical and cultural approximation will ever reach its natural consummation in an adult world vote is a question not for analysis but for creative action; analysis may only take note of the fact that the whisper for a world government responsible to a world parliament sometimes shows the potency of a clamour.

A world government would stultify itself unless it established an international pool of capital resources, which takes from each country according to its capacity and gives to each country according to its needs. Should this formula appear to be vague, another could be hammered out according to which contributions would be graded to correspond with the

economy of their origin. A world development authority could then dispense capital resources, and machinery and skill to all underdeveloped territories ranging from Missouri Valley in the U. S. to practically all of Asia and Africa. The countries that give most would need least and those who need most would give least, but the give and take must be universally spread so as to symbolise the union of the human race. This concept of an international pool of capital resources is perhaps not yet such an insistent idea as that of world parliament or world government.

In this connection a recent debate and the meaningless tumult over it in the Indian parliament was revealing. The Communist Party of India and the Government of India engaged in a rather senile encounter with one another, the communists trying to quote passages from the American Mutual Security Act in order to prove India's subordination to American security and the India Government trying as senilely to quote clauses of the Indian Act regarding American assistance in order to prove India's independence. This may be contrasted with a speech recently made by U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, when he said that he would approach Russia and China for foreign aid on the same terms and conditions that the U. S. A. had granted to Burma. There is need to state the issue of foreign aid in simple human terms; it is still thickly overlaid with sentiments and demands of arrogance on the part of the giver and with varieties of inferior complexes on the part of the receiver. Some glimmers of a visible connection between peace and disarmament on the one hand and world development authority on the other have appeared. Moscow's security or that of New York lies not so much in their armed forces as in developing prosperity of the whole world. To conserve their achieved wealth, the master states of the white world will necessarily have to help the coloured peoples to create minimum wealth in their own way. To conserve in Europe-America is to create in Africa-Asia.

As long as foreign aid is not looked upon as a two way traffic blessing both the giver and the taker, the petty arrogance of the giver of small charities and corroding jealousy of the taker of pilfered goods will continue to pollute the entire arrangement. Foreign aid of such a type cannot be a deterrent to war. Alone, a world development authority which carries the concept of internal

approximation to the world stage and transforms the concept of increasing standard of living within national frontiers to that of a decent standard of living over all the earth's surface can ensure a human civilisation without decline. But the road-blocks in the way of such a concept are terrifying. A people prefers to stint for its armed forces which are after all a demonstrable shield than to stint for other people's prosperity which can only be an invisible protection and therefore somewhat unacceptable. Whether human intelligence will ever design this approximation of a world development authority as a deterrent to the rise and fall of civilisations and to war will perhaps be known when the next world war has ended.

Another move towards human approximation is showing itself in the desire of wealthier nations to place their technological skills in the service of retarded peoples. The current expressions of this desire are not altogether desirable. They are tied up with the need for military alliances so that the desire for human welfare is subordinated to that of ill-conceived self-preservation. Furthermore, the assumption behind world-wide technical aid, that European technology could be applied to the rest of the world, is wholly erroneous. The tie-up between technological levels and unique historical and geographical situations is only inadequately realised so that, instead of a rational application of science to world economy unthinking transplantation of European agriculture and industry in the rest of the world is attempted. Ultimately, however, the desire of wealthy nations to give and of retarded nations to take technical assistance results not in approximation but in imposition. Such a one-sided giving and taking is a one-way traffic and is erroneous in conception and harmful in consequences. Humanity has not yet been able to evolve a civilisation that deserves universal reproduction. There may be much to learn from every where. In place of the one-way programmes of international technical assistance, what the world needs is a two-way traffic in which there is no giver nor taker, where two or more human groups simultaneously learn from and teach one another. There is a little evidence yet of such a two-way traffic in the ideological and economic relationships of any two human groups. Technical assistance programmes of the United Nations Organisation and its big powers are based on the haughty concept of one-way traffic. But the other trend has begun.

People's organisations and individuals have started thinking in terms of international brigades of reconstruction. Men and women from all over the world may gather into such brigades and, without any pre-conceived notions of what they are to do, they toil, away from their home surroundings, in a reciprocal spirit of give and take. Stray individuals have already started doing so. They may well be the shape of things to come. Some non-official organisations like the International Union of Socialist Youth are already toying with the idea. The United Nations or its successor organisation may some day resolve upon the setting up of such international brigades. This will then be an effort towards inter-action and approximation not alone of technologies but also of the many twigs of the human spirit. Technology and spirit are two bases of human welfare and a civilisation of total as distinct from maximum efficiency will pay heed to the summons of both. It may well be that the poise of Asia which has degenerated into sloth has some lessons for the European whose activity has also been degenerating, into strife. Europe and Asia are both degenerating, although the processes are different. Back of Asian sloth lies poise and back of European strife lies activity and, if persons belonging to various culture-complexes were brought together in work and love, the European-Americans may well shed their strife and the Asian-Africans their sloth. Such a bringing together of differing character and temperament as embodied in persons belonging to different cultures, in designed and peaceful friction and not as an act of war or rule, may well become an important mode of education, of change in the individual and cleansing of personality.

These trends at approximation of the human race are not yet of much significance in the backdrop of existing structure and spirit of international relationships. The world consists of America and Russia on the one hand with hundred and ten million tons and thirty-five million tons of annual steel respectively and the former with more than two hundred eggs and two hundred liters of milk of annual per capita consumption and, on the other, of India with 1.2 million tons of annual steel and three litres of milk and three eggs of annual per capita consumption. India illustrates the condition of almost all the coloured peoples of the world. This condition is also concealed in the charter of the United Nations which divides the world into big powers and small, four brahmin nations

and fifty-six and odd pariah nations. The system of international caste is enshrined in law. The human mind is indeed a complex mechanism capable of spending all its passion for justice against internal caste but it can remain completely unaware of and blind to the similar injustice of international caste. Such partial luminosity and blindness of the human mind has hitherto been the propeller of the wheel of history and its tragic despair. The structure of existing relationships is reflected in the spirit that motivates international behaviour. In a general way, politicians in all the world who are nationally effective are internationally wicked and, at the same time, those who are internationally good are nationally incompetent. This is true not alone of extreme cases of national chauvinism. All existing politics partakes of this quality, which is like its original sin. The basis of national politics is hostile to the development of an international conscience. National bread and freedom have been so planned in the thought and action of modern man as to militate against world bread and peace. Whether or not modern civilisation will be able to overcome this original sin and achieve human approximation may perhaps admit of a partial answer after a study of its driving forces and purposes.

MEANING OF MODERN CIVILIZATION

I once asked a philosopher from America, Scott Buchanan, what modern civilisation meant. At that time stood before me the tall and graceful buildings of Paris and there moved before me the pageant of Parisian men and women with their health and beauty of body and I felt sad because I thought of conditions obtaining in my own country and in Asia and Africa generally. The question was even more of a reverie. What is the secret of this modern civilisation ? Wherein lies its mystery ? What is it that has enabled Europe and its American descendant to build all this ? We were at that time sitting in a cafe beyond which stood the Church of Magdelene. Who does not know Jesus and Magdelene, whom, before Jesus touched her, the world called a prostitute and has since worshipped as a saint. This was a church erected in honour and memory of Magdelene, whose beautiful and noble story asserts that every one is equal of another and that a saint and a prostitute are in essence the same. All Buchanan did in answer to my query was to point at the church, which tells the story of Magdelene who lived two thousand years ago but where eighteen hundred years later the most beautiful girl of Paris was crowned the Goddess of Reason. These French revolutionaries were atheists. They had dispensed with priests and churches and also with God. There were these two secrets of European civilisation, spiritual belief in human dignity and rational faith in science, both driven to a point when they cancel each other. The modern European spirit has tried to reveal the two secrets and, while it has been helped along hitherto by the reciprocal action of both, the inherent split was always there and now stares in the face. There may be a great deal in this thought of a dualistic striving after dignity and science and the tensions and energies arising out of it. That these energies resulted in concrete achievements and did not dissipate themselves at the early start may be due to the submission of Europe

to a comparatively monistic loyalty to science, not science generally but the special brand which evolved in the course of its history. Science, particularly in its applied forms, is inevitably related to unique historical situations and it is a sign of the vulgarity of our times that the scientific temper and its concrete applications are often held synonymous. European civilisation is probably unable to pursue this dualistic monism any further.

Such interpretations of a civilisation may light it up with a sudden flash but darkness follows and they are therefore not wholly satisfying. The yearning for dignity and equality as much as material comforts of life is common to all civilisations, as is the quest for a meaning of life. The distinctive in any particular civilisation is revealed by humdrum study, although the contrast in stories such as those of the Church of Magdelene also describes the unique in a broad sweep. The distinctiveness in modern civilisation arises out of a unique rationality, a particular application of science to industry and agriculture. This civilisation has known a revolutionary technology in which tools change almost from day to day and there is continual increase in productivity. Even to this day, in countries not yet relegated like the U. S. A. and the U. S. S. R., technology is still revolutionary. No other civilisation of mankind knew this. Tools were rarely changed. The plough of the Indian farmer has been the same for more than two thousand years but, in the past three hundred years, the West European has been continually changing his tools and multiplying them. The past two hundred years of human history have seen a continual increase and multiplication of tools, which were unendingly refined. This is a civilisation of revolutionary technology consequent upon a specific type of application of science to industry and agriculture. Such a science has led to mass production, ever-growing large-scale factories and increasing concentration of capital, where for every bit of labour employed the amount of capital used continually rises.

Driven by such a science, this civilisation aims collectively at a rising national output and individually at an increasing standard of living. All active and ruling peoples of this civilisation are infatuated with this idea of an increasing national output and a rising standard of living. In the inner most recesses of the heart, what drives a person belonging to this civilisation and gives meaning

to life is the desire for a decent home and all that goes with it, wife or husband and children. The family may in a past civilisation have been a refuge for peace and social cohesiveness but it could not have played the dynamic role that it does today. It propels the modern man to economic exertion, to secure a nice home for wife and children, so that the collective aim of increasing national output and the individual aim of improving living standards is ultimately bound up with the desire for family. The emotional basis for a revolutionary technology derives in the ultimate instance from the desire for home. The American and the Russian are, without doubt, similarly motivated in their emotional attitudes. No matter that the systems of property rights in the two societies are so dissimilar, the inside of an American and a Russian is moved by the desire for a comfortable home and an increasing living standard upon which rests the entire social edifice of a rising national output. No previous human civilisation has known the equivalent of the modern man with his emotional complex and in this distinguishing trait of modern civilisation, the capitalist American and the Communist Russian are twins.

Allied with this basis of national economy and individual emotion is the vague yearning for world peace and equality which characterise the modern man. Such vague yearnings have indeed inspired man throughout history but they have for the first time acquired a pseudo-rational basis in modern civilisation. Capitalism as well as Communism have thought and still think of the golden age when, with advancing industrialisation, improving living standards and rising national output, the whole world would tie up in forms of intimate friendship and wars would fade away. The concrete rise in living standards of the European peoples through the last two centuries convinced them that society was naturally developing into a state of social and economic equality nationally and would do so in course of time on the stage of the world. It had been assumed that modern civilisation in its onward march of a world market and expanding technologies would be able to remove remnants of a backward economy even in the colonial areas and spread its benefits all over the world. A permanently revolutionary application of science to industry and agriculture with increasing concentration of capital, a rising national output collectively and an increasing living standard individually and a pseudo-rational yearning for

social equality and peace in all the world have been the distinguishing drives of modern civilisation.

But this civilisation has now reached its dead end. It has lost its capacity to spread over the world. It probably never possessed such a capacity any more than previous civilisation did and the hopes of a universal validity that it had earlier aroused are proved to be illusory. The industrial revolution in Europe and what followed it belonged to a unique historical situation, incapable of repetition in Asia and Africa. Too little land and too many men and too few tools are a mark of Asia, so that application of the technique of mass production is utterly impossible. India's density of population is over three hundred persons per sq. mile, while the Russian density has not yet reached twenty per sq. mile. Abstract talk about communist ability to solve the problem of bread as in Russia makes no sense in view of these concrete statistics of three hundred against twenty. Political and economic ideologies must be related to concrete historical situations and no greater tragedy can occur than to think of capitalism or communism and even socialism unrelated to history and geography. Existing technology made possible by the imperialist control which European civilisation exercised over the rest of the world is no longer valid. The Bessemer process in Europe for instance, which was a basis for developing its industry fructified with the opening of the Suez Canal and the Suez Canal proved prosperous when a sector of Indian agriculture was commercialised. This historical process proceeded in such fashion that every industrial and technical advance of Western Europe, which led to greater concentration of capital, was paired by a corresponding dynamic of an empire-colony relationship. The technology of modern Europe is an imperialist technology in origin and in current substance is incapable of reproduction all over the world unless an abundance of colonies in other planets were discovered.

Modern civilisation has reached its end even in respect of its master lands. The European is unable anymore to satisfy his hunger for increasing standards of living. For the last 40 years or more, France has been at a standstill. For the past 20 years or so, England has known no increase in its productivity in relation to living standards. West Europe, the prince and pride of this civilisation, has been left

behind in the race and is today much in the position that Asia has been towards it in the past two centuries. What Asia used to be towards Europe is now being felt by Europe towards the U. S. A. Modern civilisation, in the first and prime seat of its development, has come to a dead end in so far as technology refuses to be revolutionary anymore, in so far as total consumable national output does not increase and, although there is the constant hankering for an increasing standard of living, the effort is reduced to maintaining existing levels through harder work and even austerity. Furthermore, social and economic equality have been attained by the White peoples of modern civilisation to a degree at which previous human civilisations must feel humble, but the original sap seems now to be drying up. What started as the glory of the individual is no more than a number and a badge. The individual is reduced to that status in Europe. He is a number not only when he is a prisoner, but also in practically all walks of life. Starting out with the glory of individualism, this civilisation seems to have gone full circle and come to a stage when the individual is nothing but a cog in the machinery of the collective. It may be that, in its quest for social and economic equality, modern civilisation forgot to take into account spiritual equality. It is now breaking under its own weight just as previous human civilisations that attained unrivalled heights of spiritual equality got their back broken because they degenerated into the worst excesses of social and economic inequality. If previous civilisation broke down under the weight of disparity between social inequality and spiritual equality, modern civilisation is breaking down under the weight of disparity between social equality and spiritual inequality. For, modern man has through the enormous growth of revolutionary technology reached a state of mind when he can no longer feel a direct and intimate kinship with his fellowmen.

Modern civilisation, no matter what its initial urges may have been, has become a complex consisting of production of remote effect, tools of remote production, democracy of remote second grade application and even class struggle of remote justification. In modern civilisation, controls and checks are not immediate but are remote. Whether in relation to factory production or class struggle or democracy, this observation can stand a thorough test. Class struggle has been so foully distorted that error can be proved to

lead to truth, murder to health, death of democracy to fullness of democracy and sacrifice of national freedom to world unity and so forth. In such an event, one casts aside the instrument of immediate tests and thinks alone of the golden age, which is to come. In service of that golden age, one is prepared to sacrifice all immediate considerations and become a servant to remote tests. A wild gamble with evil counters takes place in the honest but unrealisable hope of achieving the good. The new civilisation would put an end to the belief in remote tests and whatever is there would be permeated by the principle of immediacy.

The modern world, perhaps because of its overriding faith in remote tests, has given birth to dichotomies and antinomies of the most frightful type, spirit and matter, individual and social, bread and culture and the like. The opposition assumed within each of such pairs is an artificial and unreal opposition. As far as spirit and matter go, I do not find any opposition except that I generally feel distressed in materialist company when I want to become a spiritualist and feel equally distressed in spiritualist company when I think as a materialist. These dichotomies are a grave malady of the modern mind, which has created certain ghosts of ideas and is unable to slay them. These dichotomies have arisen, because immediacy is flouted, because history denies fable and fable denies history.

Who in India does not know the story of Ram and Shiv in far richer detail than the story of Asoka and Buddha or whatever other historical personages that might have existed. Ram was perhaps a figment of the imagination and Shiv was undoubtedly so and yet what enormous hold they exercise over the mind of the Indian people. Compared to their influence, historical personages are nothing. There are fables and myths in other countries. It is an Apollo and a Dionysius or a local Brunhilde to the Europeans. Even historical personages sometimes get transmuted through the fire of imagination into myths. Hussain of Arabia is one of them, a figure that can evoke far greater warmth and sacrifice from the Shias than God can. The Shia may listen to blasphemies of God but one should never make the mistake of blaspheming Hussain in his presence. There are fables and myths which the human mind has created all the world over.

I am personally fascinated by the fable of Shiv perhaps because he is the only non-dimensional person known yet to the human mind or that every one of his acts carries its own justification or because of the countless shapes and hues of his relationship with Parvati. I have yet to come across a more vivid and engrossing story of love between man and woman, perhaps it was between God and Goddess, that does not matter. Woman and goddess are not far apart and, if anybody doubts, he may visit the Cairo Museum, that unrivalled store house of most ancient but somewhat unsettling objects and memories. A madness, whose tender warmth ever after lingers, will rage in his blood at the bewitching little figure of Goddess Isis, thoughtful in her bereavement but a ourvaceous perfection with a leg slightly uplifted, on the tomb of Tutankhamen, who died 4000 years ago and more and whose body still lies in a coffin. No man but would feel what "men call gallantry and gods adultery". What is so fascinating about these fables and myths which gives them a place in the mind greater than is given to history. They tell of something undying which may change its shape and form but, in substance, will eternally remain the same. They achieve love and compassion and sympathy and a unity in contemplation with all that there is.

Every moment is both a flux and an eternity. Men have so far made the mistake of confusing these two separate identities of the moment. All philosophers of history who have thought in terms of the golden age have looked upon the moment alone as flux and have forgotten its identity as eternity. All moralists who have tried to preach of individual character and improved ideals have only thought of the moment as eternity and have forgotten to take notice of it as flux. But the moment is both flux and eternity. When it is flux it belongs to the realm of history, the realm where driving forces may be sought and helped or checked. When it is eternity, it belongs to the realm of fable and myth, art and literature, religion and philosophy. Any interpretation of history that concerns itself exclusively with real events must be one-sided. If history is the grand prose of life, fables and myths are its poetry and fable is to myth what lyric is to epic. From the grand prose of life, there is much to learn and there may even be a sequence in the narration. But this sequence is of little value, unless it is refurbished with an element that lies outside the scope of history. The

millennial outlook on history may yet be proved right, not alone by the prose of which it is constituted, but by the tragic composure which gave rise to the cyclical approach. The destiny of man must be read not alone in the annals of history but also in the indestructible eternity of each moment so grandly engraved in stories that never take place but are eternally real. If man must learn to live in history, he has equal need to live outside it.

If it were possible for mankind to combine in its living these two facets of the moment and to achieve a new civilisation, it may indeed deserve a golden age but then this golden age would not be entirely of the future. This concept of a golden age of human development in the future is nothing but the image of a greedy man who denies himself in the present in order to be rich in some remote future. This idea altogether denies the moment as eternity, denies the importance of the individual when it has already been fixed in art and literature, fable and myth, religion and philosophy. For, an individual, no matter to what clime or age he may belong, would want to express ideals and desires of beauty and faith and love and make approaches towards compassion and sympathy and oneness. These scales of human living are outside the scope of history and alone an idiot would try to torture them in.

We may in fact be heading for a golden age if we try to achieve that golden age in the immediate. In as far as we achieve it in the immediate and bring into play the principle of immediacy, the connecting link between the moment as flux and the moment as eternity may also be established. If they are held as two separate categories, one belonging to the realm of spirit and the other belonging to the realm of matter great debacle and misfortune may descend on us. They must weave into one another and the connecting link between the two is the principle of immediacy, immediacy in class struggle, immediacy in production, immediacy in world parliament, immediacy in approximation. This principle of immediacy ordains that each single act contain its own justification and there is no need to call upon the succeeding act in order to justify what is done here and now. While each act must be justifiable by itself, there is equal need to comprehend the driving forces of history and to serve the destiny of man by promoting such of them as are benevolent. Compassion and

revolution have to interweave and any preferential loyalty to one or the other would heap disaster on the spiritual as well as the material.

Those who believe in the golden age of a distant future are often victims of a strange illusion so that they carry out ignoble acts in furtherance of high ideals and think that these ignoble acts are justified by the outcome of a remote future. That golden age shall never come. But if we imbibe the principle of immediacy in our acts, whether with regard to production or class struggle, with regard to achievement of a classless and casteless society or a mankind in which regional shifts of power and prosperity do not occur, it may be possible to combine the moment as flux and as eternity. In trying to achieve the golden age here and now we may perhaps make it possible for the next generation to achieve a state from which war and poverty and fear will have been eliminated.

TOTAL EFFICIENCY

No past civilisation was ever able to alter its course and to change from maximum efficiency in its initial direction to total efficiency in all directions. In order to attain total efficiency, a civilisation would have to be valid for the whole of mankind and the whole individual. On both these counts, previous human civilisations have failed to develop. Every one of them attempted to attain maximum efficiency for its own special people so that a civilisation and its carrier could contend with and over-power the outside world. The nature and type of this efficiency always varied but it could not abolish the barrier between the chosen people and the outside world and could never, therefore, overcome regional shifts of power and prosperity into a single world of comparatively equal welfare. In like manner, the possibilities of the individual in any human civilisation were opened out only to the extent that maximum efficiency of the collective required. Such talents or insights as have been unnecessary for the efficiency of a particular civilisation have generally not been used at all. The full development of personality has, therefore, never taken place. One part or the other of an individual may have been maximised but the whole has never been touched. Existing civilisation and its future must be tested by these two criteria of total efficiency.

The most concrete characteristic of existing civilisation is its capitalisation. If the whole of mankind were to be cast in the image of the masters or carriers of this civilisation, the volume of necessary capital would be out of all proportion to economic possibilities. If mankind were to be changed into the image of the United States, it would need to have a capital of fifteen thousand billion rupees and the West European shape would also require at least half as much. It is just not possible for the submerged peoples to put out such an effort by themselves. The master peoples cannot

acquire the will for such an effort, even if they could somehow scrounge the means over a period of a century or so. Furthermore, a stubborn difficulty inheres in the quality of existing technology which incapacitates it from spreading equally all over the world. Even assuming that the master peoples could somehow sacrifice their own standards of living in order to approximate their production with that of the retarded peoples, there would be a permanent time lag. This lag could only be closed on the assumption that technology in master lands ceased to be revolutionary. Such an assumption would bring into play that driving force of history which leads to regional shifts.

To manufacture atom and hydrogen bombs in order to protect the special privileges of one's civilisation is far easier than to share them with a depressed world. The frightening terror of these bombs must be regarded in the back drop of history. They are the claws and fangs and the overpowering weight of modern civilisation. Their possession turns the owner into some kind of a Dinosaur, who died under his own weight. But the power of these bombs is only the maximisation of the specific efficiency in weapons of war which European civilisation used to defeat all other peoples and has continued developing. These bombs are, therefore, none else than the hooded serpents of fable that guard hoarded treasure. That these serpents have multiplied or so increased their venom as to be of danger to the masters of the treasure is part of the game. The possession of atomic or hydrogen bombs will become increasingly irksome to their owners. The costs of their manufacture, the permanent threat of their use, the attitudes of mind aroused by them and their ultimate employment in war must necessarily impart to existing civilisation the vices of decay and doom.

A question may here be asked if there is any other civilisation, in whatever stages of a chrysalis, which shows some reasonable prospect of developing another type of efficiency particularly in weapons of war. There is none today. Even those peoples which are talking of non-violence as a weapon of international relationships are not showing any awareness of the problems of decentralized defence and are the greediest in the matter of collecting any old weapons of the European civilisation. It is, therefore, not yet possible to point to a civilisation in the making, which could contend

with and over-power the existing civilisation. But, perhaps, there were no other beasts, more powerful and also visibly around, when the Dinosaur was dying. The essential question therefore is whether the existing civilisation could by willed design change over from maximum into total efficiency and not whether there are any rivals in a position to out-strip it. That it will be out-rivalled is certain unless it is intelligent and supple enough to change over into total efficiency.

In order to discover whether the technology and spirit of total efficiency will be possible to European civilisation, its conceptual tale in terms of theories of international trade may be of some use. There was a time when this civilisation thought in terms of a geographical division of labour. Like benefits accruing to a nation through division of labour practised in its mechanised and large scale factories, international trade was in theory expected to confer the benefits of an international division of labour on the whole of mankind. European civilisation was then in the period of its rise. The mind was full of hope. Its theories were, therefore, hopeful. It could mistake the maximum efficiency of a chosen people into which European civilisation was travelling for the total efficiency of all mankind. There is no other explanation for the erroneous theory of international trade when it was grounded in the international division of labour. When European civilisation started splitting into societies of greater or lesser prosperity and unemployment became a chronic malady of some West European societies, the mind had to make another effort. Again, it did not think in terms of total efficiency of mankind but continued to be warped by notions of maximum efficiency. It has, of course, always talked of abstract principles valid for the whole of mankind even when these in reality concealed the selfish desire of advancement of the chosen people. Theories of international trade were therefore revised so as to include the concept of full employment.

Although clothed in universal terms, this concept is essentially West-European. It has meaning alone in the background of rational employment. On areas where most people are not employed rationally and therefore do not produce wealth equal to that of rational employment, international trade would confer little benefit. Alone as between two economies of comparative rationality such

as those of Britain and America and in the event of their becoming victim to the disease of chronic or widespread unemployment, a theory of world trade based on international division of labour plus full employment can be of beneficial application. What use can full employment be to those depressed economies where ten to fifteen hours of strenuous labour produces as much wealth as an hour of human labour of the developed economies in the exchange of goods with the latter ? In order therefore to produce a universally valid theory of world trade, it is necessary to bring all these concepts together, international division of labour, full employment and rational production. There is need not alone to secure full employment but also such employment as produces comparatively equal wealth in all regions of the world. It is not at all surprising that the existing civilisation has, inspite of over two hundred years of economic thinking, been unable to produce a theory of full employment based on comparatively equal production. Such a theory would be immeasurably explosive. It would explode notions of increasing standards of living within national frontiers, of existing technological forms as necessarily scientific, of the nation-state itself. But the mind would have to come to this theory if it is true to itself and, in doing so, it must devise a spirit and technology based on the desire of a decent standard of living for all humanity. The theory has indeed been formulated, however primitively yet, in the submerged areas and it is upon the carriers of European civilisation to accept it or reject it. Even more significant than mental acceptance of this theory would be the evidence of will and struggle for its realisation. Such an evidence is yet lacking. But the awareness of the need to change over from maximum to total efficiency seems to be growing.

In the manner that existing civilisation is unable to spread its benefits totally over mankind, it is also not able to awaken the entire being of man. Only such of his capacities are brought into play as are connected however indirectly with the need for rising national output. A recluse may still contemplate, but the genius or the little men have no time nor taste for contemplation. The individual in existing civilisation has now reached a stage when he can neither become great nor find relaxed ease. The mind seems to have come to the end of its voyage. It is also in a state of permanent but barren unrest. Cultural tests of existing civilisation

are tending to become grotesque. The writing of books has become a craft like carpentry and the reading of them is like the use of a comfortable bed designed to secure freedom from pain and ennui. The modern man is dynamic but used up; his tragedy is to labour hard for a routine of joyless comfort.

Lest there should be an error of understanding, the modern man must be recognised for what he is worth in that he is superior to all other extant types of man in physical and moral fitness. White races as the outstanding representatives of the modern man easily secure the first dozen places in the olympic games of the world. The Negro is indeed coming up, but his physical excellence is, compared to that of the white and except in certain limited spheres, more a promise than an achievement. The resilience shown by some of the white races in recovering from the defeat and destruction of the last war is proof enough of their moral fitness. Germans have outstripped their pre-war positions. What part the lever of living standards can play in uplifting a modern person physically and normally was amply demonstrated by post-war Germany. The possession of a hand-bag and shoe *a la mode*, or even the prospect of possessing one, set many a German dame on the road to physical tidiness and moral correctitude.

Modern man is nevertheless neither happy nor able to open up new paths. He is still a hard worker but how long will he be able to put up with the endless boredom of reproducing himself without variations. He is likely to crack up finally under the weight of his tensions. He cannot learn to be happy, for he is not at peace with himself. He does not know how to make fresh explorations in living. The bases of existing civilisation are inimical to happiness or relaxed activity and they have been built upon so much that there is little room for further construction. Only then will the individual feel the joy of expressing his total personality, when he evolves a culture of outward activity and inward poise. Reversal to ancient types of civilisation will no more give him the poise than continuance of the existing type ensure him activity and a piecemeal combination of both may well provide him with the sloth of poise and the strife of activity. It is a tragedy of the times and of existing civilisation that precisely such urges to reversal or continuance or unthinking combination move the modern man. New integra-

tions are perhaps not born until the donkey refuses to exert for the old carrot.

The split of European civilisation into the Atlantic and Soviet camps is wholly irrelevant to the problem of change-over from maximum to total efficiency. The language of the split is universal and it talks of universally valid principles such as capitalism and communism. The impression is loudly created as if the destiny of the human race were at stake and the quarrel were about principles and a social and world order. Neither of these doctrines, however, has concretely concerned itself with the two basic issues of total efficiency in respect of the whole of mankind as well as the whole individual. Communism has indeed talked of a world order based on equality among nations and the full development of human personality, both to arise out of the abolition of exploitation. But these general ideals are as deceptive and meaningless as the earlier ones of capitalism which also talked of a world order arising out of perfect competition. Neither doctrine has tried to translate these general wishes into concrete ideals. They have nothing worth while to say either in respect of capitalisation in all the world or of expression of the whole man.

This is not a new development. Ever before, when a civilisation had matured and was about to decay, it tended to split in order to regenerate itself. Rome and Byzantium, Kaurawas and Pandawas, Memphis and Nineveh are some examples of such a split. The entire world of its time shook with each of these splits and the wars that it caused, so say the poets and writers of the period, and there is substantial truth in that. But there was nothing in the split itself which should have been of concern to the whole world. A most characteristic saying has come from the age of the Mahabharata when the five Pandawa brothers and the hundred Kaurawa brothers fought themselves to death, but told the outside world that they were five more than a hundred. No matter what ferocious war they waged with each other, the splitting cousins tried to serve their common civilisation to the best of their insight and ability. The Atlantics and the Soviets, capitalists and communists, are in their own different ways trying to serve the driving urges of their civilisation, developing national output and increasing standards of living within national frontiers, application of science

to industry and agriculture in the direction of the large-scale, the quest for social equality and a comfortable home, and, in sum, the perpetuation of European civilisation. Their method varies in respect of who shall own property and this variation can result in hideous wars of extermination. But the aims of their endeavour do not vary and to the outside world they are "five more than a hundred". The din of their quarrel is however deafening. It makes the outside world think that some universal human principles are at stake and are variously represented by one or the other side. This is one of the most tragic aspects of human destiny in all history. Slaves have often taken part in the rivalries and wars of their masters not as mercenaries but as idealists. But there is a very slender possibility that the submerged world may on this occasion keep out of the capitalist communist split in such fashion as to persuade large sections of the master peoples themselves that their split was wholly irrelevant to the creation of the new human civilisation.

Nothing new ever got born without a struggle. This struggle need not necessarily be violent or bloody. In the past, it has always been so because it accompanied the internal oscillation between class and caste and the external shifts of power and prosperity. With the aim of overcoming class and caste and regional shifts into an approximation of the human race, the struggle must necessarily be civil and non-violent. The forms of this struggle for internal purposes are available in some measure. None exist as far as international relationships are concerned. Continual refinement of internal forms and discovery of external forms of this new type of struggle are essential. The combination of revolution with compassion is civil disobedience. In the mass and for the individual, civil disobedience will have to become an enduring attitude of the mind. Stupendous injustices relating to inequality both among the nations and within the nation are practised every day so that civil disobedience has no chance against violent struggles unless it becomes a permanent attitude. In order also to express the whole individual in his total nature and not to maximise this or the other aspect of him, it would be necessary to give him a weapon which would enable him to maintain his dignity in all circumstances. Civil disobedience is such a weapon and the only one.

The wheel of history does not foretell whether its revolving would cease. But once again there is an auspicious constellation of conditions. Man stands before the choice of hitting out into yet another direction of maximum efficiency or walking into a state of total efficiency. Should he choose to break the wheel of history, the outlines of his new civilisation have already shown themselves. This new civilisation would attempt to achieve approximation of the human race and the overcoming of class and caste and regional shifts through comparatively equal production in all the world. Its technology and administration would be suited to this requirement and, on the basis of respective sovereignties of decentralized communes and an integrated mankind, the people would be able to rule themselves. Means of production would be brought under social ownership, although such forms of property as justly redivided land may be left in individual use. Loyal adherence to the concept of a minimum and a maximum of incomes within the nation so as to tend towards equality would enlarge and deepen the processes of approximation. Man, individually and in the collective, will know the practice of civil disobedience against injustice. The individual will seek to know the combination of fable with history, the eternal with the flux, and, in trying to develop his whole personality of poise as well as struggle, he will take part in this new civilisation of tranquil activity.

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